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# The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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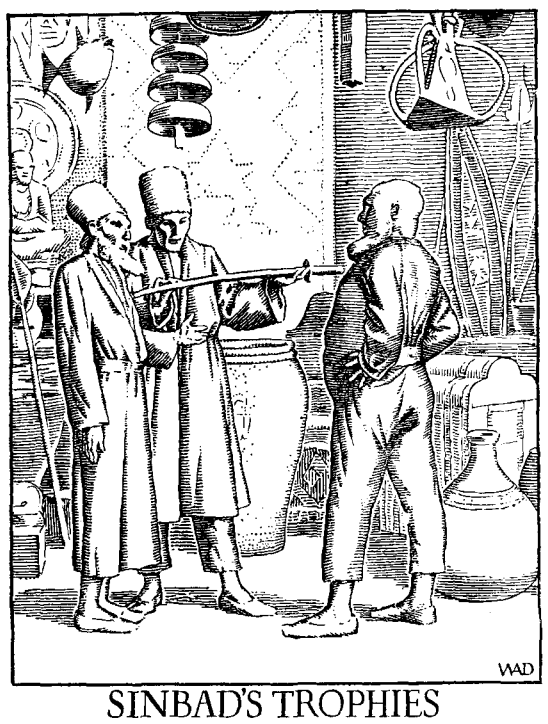


SINBAD'S TROPHIES

They thronged to marvel, and they marvelled much,
At the seven-times-voyaged, in his age; but he
Talking, squared shoulders, shrugging off the touch
Of an older than the Ancient of the Sea.

## "Well Read"

WHAT is a well-read man? Is he like the "well-dressed" man of the advertisements, who wears exactly what the majority of expensive dressers are putting on at the moment? Bacon had no such meaning in his famous essay. Good reading cannot be merely imitative, though it may be inspired. Second-hand tastes are not tastes at all, but appetites. No one will quarrel with these platitudes.

But another platitude does arouse controversy. Beware the man of one book, says the old aphorism. Whenever a new book is published, read an old one, is a variant of the same statement. Stick to the pure gold of literature and let the tinsel go, is just a third wording of the same idea, which stated in plain English says that the well-read man is he who reads nothing but what time has proved to be the best. Beware of him, for he carries a heavy charge drawn from greatness.

These slogans are popular with scholars, teachers, and librarians, and naturally, for they are really the armament of defense complexes. Readers are like sheep, running in herds toward the last grass to turn green, no matter how rank or how thin it is. To read the new is always easy for them, to appreciate the old always difficult. The Iliad was never popularized until John Erskine's "Private Life of Helen of Troy" made Homer a novelty, good for the movies. Old books have to be taught; new books teach themselves. Hence, when the scholar speaks his contempt for new books, the rubbish of our times, he is on the defensive. He exaggerates the demerits of his own day in order to emphasize by contrast the classic excellences which most readers so willingly neglect.

What then is a well-read man? Certainly not a reader who reads only modern books. He has no background and no standards of comparison. He gets the milk of good books, but not the cream, and he is the ready dupe of every shallow imitator. No one disputes this.

But the opposite is equally true. The man who reads no new books is not and cannot be well read. He may spend his nights with Addison and his days with the "Divine Comedy." He may read the "Faery Queene" three times or work upon the Greek tragedians until the barriers of language fall. He may be soundly based in all the great classics, but if he reads no modern books he is not well read. If the greatest clerks are not the wisest men, this is one of the reasons—their knowledge sometimes stops short of their own times. And if criticism written by scholars has so often been wrong, this again is one reason why.

* * *

The question can be argued either backward or forward. The only age which a man knows of his own knowledge and with some certainties at least, is his own. He cannot see it as a whole, but he knows some parts, and knows them with indisputable accuracy and with an emotional rightness that is more than reason. Our best history is documented guessing, our best interpretations of earlier literature miss much that Shakespeare or Milton or Goethe meant to their own ages. A reader must read in the light of his own first-hand knowledge of life, and the less he knows of life, the less he will get from the vital heart of the classics. This does not mean that the reader of Sophocles should attend incest cases in the local police court. It does mean that the perception of contemporary life, which to a devoted reader will most often be focussed by modern books, must be vivid, if he is to see the gold of earlier writers as more than dead metal.

Or put it another way, and assert that literature is a continuous process without breaks, and therefore without a point at which classics cease and "modern rubbish" begins. Academic critics in every generation have spoken of such a point as if it really existed. Usually it is indicated in the youth of the speaker: sometimes in the century just past. There is no such point; there is only a change in focus. Books get too near us; we see too many of them; no one has provided glasses for us; it is easier to talk of modern rubbish which began to accumulate after the last great writer died. This of course is nonsense, very solemn nonsense.

* * *

We will challenge, therefore, the title of well-read in anyone, no matter how erudite, how steeped in the best of earlier literatures, who has no discrimination in, because no vital contacts with, modern literature. Among English readers we will distrust the critic of Shakespeare who has not read Shaw, as much as the critic of Shaw who has not read Shakespeare. We will listen to no lectures on the psychology of Racine by critics who have not read in Freud and Jung (imagine Racine not reading there!). Nor are we more interested in the philosophy of behaviorists who know only behaviorism.

But are there intellectual hermits in our civilization? Does not the man of one book read modern novels on the sly? Is not the scholar who despises modern stuff and nonsense deterred by the cost, the number, and difficulty of judging new books without the guidance from tradition to which he is accustomed? Is the contempt for one's own time in literature only a pose? It may be, or it may be just the scholar's way of saying that most new books in the light of eternity, are rubbish, which is too obvious to argue about. But if a pose, it is a pose dangerous to good judgment. Those who despise their own literature will never understand it, and if they do not comprehend their own times, what certainty, or probability even, that they will be masters of antiquity!

## Twelve Books—and Why

By JOHN GALSWORTHY

NOT so long ago I was chloroformed into a public declaration of what seemed to me the world's twelve best works of fiction, outside Poetry and Drama. When I came to myself, I began to wonder for what qualities I had chosen that particular twelve; and, for the sake of a clear, or comparatively clear mind, I here set down the result of my wonderings.

The books were these: Cervantes's "Don Quixote;" Tolstoy's "War and Peace" and "Anna Karenina;" Dickens's "The Pickwick Papers" and "David Copperfield;" Turgeniev's "Fathers and Children" and "Smoke;" Dumas's "The Musketeer" series and "The Reine Margot" series (but only when read in their native French); Dostoievsky's "The Brothers Karamazov;" Mark Twain's "Tom Sawyer" and Huckleberry Finn," and Thackeray's "Vanity Fair."

I added a postscript of doubt concerning "Smoke," the "Reine Margot" series, and "Vanity Fair." But on reflection I do not see with what I should replace them.

First, in my cogitation, I perceived that all of these books were very long, with the exception of the two Turgenievs and the Mark Twain. Sheer bulk then seemed to be an advantage, following the maxim of the racecourse—not invariably justified—that "a good big one will always beat a good little one."

I next perceived that all of them without exception were easy to read, putting no strain to speak of on the intellect, either in matter or in style; from this I deduced, either that I was a lazy dog, or that readability was a prime virtue.

Pursuing my search for common factors, I found that all these books have what I call a "springy" texture, your mind walks on them as if on resilient turf; it neither skates, as over the polished slippery surface of, say, a "Thais" or an "Egoist," nor gets heavy-footed in the valuable clay of a "Salammbo," a "Clarissa Harlowe," or a "Père Goriot." The texture of Cervantes, Dickens, Dumas, Mark Twain, Thackeray, and the Russian Turgeniev, is springier,


### This Week

Drawing. By *W. A. Dwiggins.*
Quatrain. By *William Rose Benét.*
"Woodrow Wilson." Reviewed by *Henry Noble MacCracken.*
"The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple." Reviewed by *A. Edward Newton.*
"Genghis Khan." Reviewed by *F. W. Williams.*
"Better to Bite." By *Oliver Goldsmith.*
Jottings on a Learned Profession. By *Wilson Follett.*
Books for Christmas Giving. By *Amy Loveman.*

### Next Week, or Later

On History. By *James Truslow Adams.*


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no doubt, than that of the other two Russians, but even they have a certain resilience of fibre.

The next and, as I think, very important common factor that I discovered, was that all these books contain one, or more, unforgetable—one might say immortal—characters. Don Quixote and Sancho Panza in the first; Natasha, Pierre, and Prince Andrey in the second; Anna and Stepan Arkadyevitch in the third; Pickwick, Sam Weller, Jingle, and Old Weller in the fourth; Betsy Trotwood and Micawber in the fifth; Bazarov and Pavel Petrovitch in the sixth; Irina in the seventh; D'Artagnan et Cie. in the eighth; Bussy and Chicot in the ninth; the Youngest Karamazov in the tenth; Tom and Huck in the eleventh, and in the twelfth, Becky Sharp. This, indeed, seems a really indispensable feature of the greatest fiction, and the absence of it would rule out any book. Gogol's "Dead Souls" could not come in; neither, according to my judgment as to what is unforgetable character, could Melville's "The White Whale" nor Stendhal's "La Chartreuse de Parme."

* * *

When I had got as far as this, I seemed to have reached the end of common elements, unless it were true that all these books had what I call "familiar spirit." Proceeding to put them to that test, and discounting for the extravagance of Dickens, the *panache* of Dumas, and the epilepsies of Dostoievsky, I discovered that they do all have that particular quality, and in marked degree. In other words, a reader will live while reading, in the same houses, the same streets and towns and countries, as the people of these books. This is but a crude way of putting exactly what I mean by "familiar spirit." Its essence may perhaps be a very deep reality, the reality of a sensory apprehension and presentment of place and character as contrasted with an intellectual or invented apprehension and presentment.

It is indeed something that can be felt about a book but can hardly be described. Flaubert has not got it, except perhaps in "Un Coeur Simple." His "Salammbo" is a marvelous bit of painting, but it remains a picture; and even at "Madame Bovary," and her frame, one stands apart and gazes. One doesn't live with her, however one may want to. Hawthorne just misses "familar spirit." Zola never had it; nor Meredith; nor Victor Hugo. Defoe had it in "Robinson Crusoe" (and in some moods this book would take on my list the place of "Vanity Fair"). On the other hand, I don't quite feel "familiar spirit" in Fielding—fine book though "Tom Jones" undoubtedly is. The great Russian writers, one and all, have it in their work; and this is probably what makes Arnold Bennett say that the twelve best novels of the world were all written by Russians. It is present in the "Tale of Genji"—but some other qualities are not; in Hudson's "Purple Land," and Kenneth Grahame's "Golden Age," and, curiously enough, in the nonsensic "Alice in Wonderland," in Conrad's "Youth" and "Nigger of the Narcissus," but not by any means in all his work. Stevenson had it in "Kidnapped" and "Catriona," but in his novels scarcely anywhere else, lovely writer though he be. Maupassant achieves it in "Yvette" and "Boule de Suif," but not quite in his novels. I maunder on with illustrations, because I fight shy of trying to define the indefinable. Whether it is the same quality as "breath of life" I don't quite know, but it is as near as makes little matter.

* * *

Two modern writers, both young Englishwomen, with very different technique, have it—Katherine Mansfield in most of her work, and Margaret Kennedy in "The Constant Nymph." It is present in "The Old Wives' Tales," in "Riceyman's Steps," and in "Mr. Polly;" in James Boyd's historical novel "Drums." "Babbitt" has it, and "Elmer Gantry" hasn't. But I become invidious.

When I had got so far in the record of my wonder, I discussed the whole matter with a friend.

"The sense of humor is necessary," he said, "to any great work of fiction."

"Then what," I answered, "about the Russians?"

He withdrew gracefully, and I began to regret my answer.

The five Russian books in my list certainly contain very little humor, but they do not give the impression that the writers are lacking in that saving grace; while many books with much more so-called humor do. Turgeniev, Tolstoy, Dostoievsky, so very different from each other, were all men of glancing minds, and that is what really matters; not the introduction of so much comedy per acre. My friend resumed:

"But *the* test, I always think, of the really great in literature is that it should be larger than life."

"That," said I, "is a very dangerous phrase." And so it is—it lets in the "seven-foot high," and the esthetes' silly contention that Art is larger than Life; as if a part could ever be larger than the whole. But in the careful sifting of words which followed, it appeared that my friend merely meant that in the greatest fiction the characters, or some of them, should sum up and symbolize whole streaks of human nature in a way that our friends, however well known to us, do not. And that is perfectly true. It is the reason why Irina and Bazarov, and the Don and Sancho, and Pickwick and Micawber, and Becky and D'Artagnan, are unforgetable. Within their belts are cinctured not only individuals, but sections of mankind; and, moreover, sections of importance in the make-up of a world not averse from variety. Within the corset of Irina is bound up all fascination. Modernity would call her a "vamp," and I should be inclined to black its eye for it; one should not apply a vulgar word to a type exquisite, however dangerous—I have never forgotten a dinner-party in Boston where the epithet was used of Audrey Noel in my own novel, "The Patrician," a much more passive and less dangerous type than Irina. Within Bazarov we have the very kernel of modernity, its brutal frankness, its passion for life stripped, its denial, its unquenchable curiosity, and its restive energy. In that stark young doctor with his mania for dissecting frogs, Turgeniev did not merely foreshadow Nihilism, he foreshadowed this post-war age; just as in Pavel Petrovitch he epitomized the fastidious spirit which the last sixty years has been gradually replacing. There is no need to expatiate on what Cervantes incorporated in the immortal Don, nor in his foil, the equally immortal Sancho, nor on what is wrapped up in the comfortable frame of Pickwick, nor in that supple and complete cat Becky, nor indeed in any of the other unforgetable characters of these twelve books. All boyhood is in Tom and Huck; all parade in Porthos; all girlhood in Natasha; all scheming subtlety in Aramis; all starved virginity in Betsy Trotwood; all gambling optimism in Micawber, and so forth and so on.

But perhaps if we had pursued our conversation further, my friend would have contended that the whole of a great work of fiction should be larger, or rather *richer*, than life. Well, of course it should. Selection, conscious and unconscious, is the secret of Art—a field typically painted will render for you the whole of the English shires; a few pages, such as those describing the death of Bazarov, bring before you all death. All the spirit of rivers is in "Huckleberry Finn"; all passion in "Smoke," and all the essence of adventure in "The Three Musketeers" and the "Reine Margot." In this essential of being richer than life, none of these twelve books is in the least lacking.

* * *

In the examination of my reasons for selecting them I started by finding them all eminently readable; I end by considering whether or not they are conspicuously rereadable. I learn from my own experience that they all are; and in the following order: "The Pickwick Papers;" "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn;" "The Musketeer" series; "Don Quixote;" "War and Peace;" "David Copperfield;" "Fathers and Children" and "Smoke;" "Anna Karenina;" "The Reine Margot" series; "Vanity Fair," and "The Brothers Karamazov." I don't say that this indicates my view of their relative merit; it only indicates my peculiar temperament. To find books rereadable, however, and even very rereadable is, I think, a *sine qua non* of selection, and a very good way of making sure that one has not selected out of an unconscious snobbery, or desire to be in the intellectual fashion of the time, a most insidious literary malady to which we are all liable. Rereadability can only be judged over a long period of one's life; to stand the test properly, a book ought to be rereadable at almost any age after, say, twenty-five, when the sap has finished running up our trunks to all main intents. I think, at the age of sixty, if I could take those twelve books with me to Tristan d'Acunha, where ships only call, it seems, about once in two years, I could get on fairly well for the rest of my life, without feeling that I was divorced from the world as it was, is, and will be.

And now, having cleared my mind of wonder on the point at issue, there is no reason why I should talk on.

# America on a Cultural Jag

By Sherwood Anderson

THE great fault with American writing just now is, I am pretty sure, that we American writers are being taken too seriously. We are faced with a queer situation. America seems to be on a cultural jag. We are suddenly, and as a people, terribly intent on getting culture and getting it now. If you are any kind of a writer in America now it isn't difficult to get fame. The great difficulty is not to get it.

*Look* at the situation, will you? There are several books of the best short stories of the year; prizes for great novels are given by publishing houses constantly; there are books of great short stories of the world—we stop at nothing—and how many literary magazines are there?—how many literary pages in newspapers?

All of the men employed in literary discussion cannot possibly spend all of their time talking of each other, and the popular writers give them so little fresh material. To be popular, as everyone knows, is always to write the same story over and over, year after year, from the time when you begin writing until you die.

Perhaps after all it isn't that we are taking writing too seriously. Few enough men in any age know anything about writing. What we are demanding is figures, personages; we want great writers, great men.

But a man cannot be even a decent writer and be a great man. To be great, a man must surely separate himself entirely from the life about him; he must draw himself away, be like a king or a Napoleon, something special in life.

The great difficulty with all of this concentration on writing is the thing it does to the writer. Nowadays, a man cannot possibly escape. There is no hole left into which he can crawl. It may all have come about because of syndication and standardization. I don't know. But, my God, look at us!

You take my own case for example. Well, here I am. I am an American man. I haven't been to school much and I started out in life as a workingman.

I presume from the beginning I had a leaning toward books and the written word. I like to write. Sometimes I think I do it fairly well and sometimes I know I do it badly.

Being a writer, I am of necessity deeply interested in people. For the most part, I have never sought the centers where literary men congregate. I have never lived in Greenwich Village—knowingly, at least—and have never spent more than a day at a time in the city of Boston.

Of course I have written books, quite a lot of them. There they are standing on the shelf. There are too many of them. I have never written a book or a story that satisfied me, except for a brief passing moment. When they get cold, I can never bear to open them again.

For example, I think of a story I once wrote and published. "It was pretty good," I tell myself. I go and get down the book in which it was printed. It never satisfies me.

It may be that in writing I am seeking a kind of perfection, a blending of the matter with some inner thing, I hardly dare speak of, and that such a blend can never be perfectly made.

And what of that, too? Why all the furor? I have never pretended to be a great writer. I do not think I am one and I am pretty sure that, if I were mighty few men would know it.

What has always puzzled me is the assurance of the men who write about writing. I gather from what some of them say that there is such a thing as a standard of perfection, and that these men have it at their fingers' end. Why they do not give it to the world, so that we may all know it, I do not know. How very selfish they are!

As for the particular criticism of the particular thing—up to this time I have never answered any critic of my own world and I am pretty sure I never will. If they want to know it, I can go further than they can. I have never had a legitimate criticism of my own work that had not already gone through my own mind.

Of course I do not take into account such ideas as sex obsession, dirty-mindedness, gloom, etc. I am not gloomy and have never had a sex obsession. The man who has that doesn't write. He goes out

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and satisfies his obsession. I am told by men so inclined that it isn't so difficult.

But to get back to what I really wanted to say. I think, after a time, when a man has had a certain amount of what is called publicity, the one great yearning of his soul is to be let alone.

It can't be done. Once they get after you in America, you are a gone goose. Your private life is searched into; your face is constantly being printed somewhere, and the worst of it all is that everyone is quite convinced that is what you want.

Well, what are you to do? Are you to get ugly, flee, knock someone down? What a corking newspaper story that would be!

Let us say you are, like myself, a writer of tales. Surely everyone knows that to write tales of people in any understanding way, you cannot separate yourself from people. And such a man as myself does not want to separate himself. As a matter of fact, I have always been absorbed in life.

But what chance have I with people who have been told that I am some impossible thing like a famous writer? What chance have I if I am any kind of a newspaper figure?

To a certain extent I am one. How am I to wipe out this blot?

I have been thinking of this matter for a long time. It is becoming rather an obsession with me. The condition has grown worse, I imagine, in America because of the growth of standardization in newspaper making and the coming of the movies and the radio.

Are we coming to a time when all life will be public life? It may be. It is surely pretty hard on anyone who has a tendency toward any one of the arts. So-called great men are too easily destroyed. The interest aroused by most publicity is not in a man's work, but in himself.

We are all to much praised and too much blamed.

But that is not the thing that interests me. I am chiefly interested in remaining a writer and avoiding, if I can, the necessity of being any kind of a public man.

And how may that be done? It is true I might write under a *nom de plume*, but there is something shameful about that. And it does no good. Samuel Clemens, after he became Mark Twain, remained Mark Twain.

What I am thinking of is a suggestion. It has been in my mind for a long time. I am wondering if it would not be possible, as a sort of antidote to all of this easy public attention, that so raises the devil with a man's life, to have a general movement started for doing away with all signing of the written word.

For example, why not have at least one magazine in America in which no man signs anything?

We writers have to make a living in some way, so pay us on the merit of what we do. Let the editor or the editors of the magazine decide. Let him buy the works of men and not their names. The thing has been done before in the world's history. I believe there were no names signed to the lovely work done on the cathedral of Chartres. Surely there were workmen there as important as any the modern American world can produce.

# A First Volume of Poems

FLOODGATE. By David McCord. Cambridge: Washburn & Thomas. 1927.

HERE are verses by a young poet who has a song in his heart, but who does not always as yet find for it the right releasing magic. That perfect fusion—Oneness—of mood, idea, expression, and music, which is poetry, is so subtle a thing, so essentially inscrutable—and so seldom achieved! Mr. McCord, thus far, brings us intimations of poetry rather than poetry itself. The god is there, but remains somehow veiled from us. He is so shy a god, so sensitive to slight imperfections! Mr. McCord writes

> For leaf and wind and wave the autumns squander
> In a mad, wild ecstasy of days. . . .

and with the first line the god steps forward to the threshold, but with the second he retreats again. Or Mr. McCord begins a sonnet

> Let the great quiet lie between my hands,

but later, in the same sonnet, seeking a rhyme, he brings in "*lovely sarabands*"—and the god refuses to appear. Nevertheless, he is *there*—one feels his presence and knows that the shrine is not empty. And one feels, too, that the right releasing magic may one day be found and the god made manifest.

# Sandburg's Songbag

THE AMERICAN SONGBAG. By Carl Sandburg. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1927. $7.50.

Reviewed by Franklin P. Adams (F.P.A.)

INTO the American Christmas stocking should go Carl Sandburg's glorious, beautiful, brimming, singable, abundant compilation, "The American Songbag." As one who remembers the World's Columbian Exposition by "After the Ball" and "Daisy Bell," and the Battle of Manila by Miss Ethelia Levey's singing of George M. Cohan's "I Guess I'll Have to Telegraph My Baby" between the acts of Hoyt's "A Milk White Flag" on that May Sunday night at the Grand Opera House, Chicago; as one who thinks that Mr. Mark Sullivan doesn't include in his "Our Times" enough contemporaneous lyric atmosphere, and that Mr. Paxton Hibben might have intensified Henry Ward Beecher's picture by telling about the songs the people were singing in those days (Mr. Hibben omits mention of the interesting and pertinent fact that Theodore Tilton was the author of "Baby Bye, Here's a Fly"); as one who considers Mr. George Abbott a great man less for his acting in "Processional" and his collaboratory parts in the writing of "Broadway" and "Coquette" than for his superb singing of "I'm only a poor cowboy, and I know I've done wrong" in Maxwell Anderson's "White Desert,"—as such a reader, singer, and reviewer I think Sandburg's book the most interesting collection ever compiled. "The American Songbag"

*KARL, SHERWOOD, and IRWIN ANDERSON*

makes me prouder to be an American than all the stories of Bunker Hill and Listen, my children, and In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress. I would rather, gentlemen, hear those songs sung, or read them, or even sing them myself than—as the story goes—see General Grant in full uniform, epaulets and all.

Sandburg, as you may know, has traveled all over the United States, lecturing about matters and things, and closing his program with a half hour or so of songs. It was his habit to give oral footnotes to each song, and there began to pour in on him from many authentic quarters various bits of information about these songs—their origins, their music, their legends. They were songs, for the most part, of the "Frankie and Johnny" and "Casey Jones" school, songs that have been sung not from published versions, but from hearing them sung. So the ultimate versions vary with the geography; a word changed here, a note there, until it is not always easy to tell what the first song was. But these songs are the closest thing we have to American balladry; some of them are traceable to the Scotch and English ballads in Percy's Reliques—the Kentucky mountain songs particularly (cf Howard Brockway's "Lonesome Tunes")—and some are utterly American.

"The American Songbag," Mr. Sandburg says, "comes from the hearts and voices of thousands of men and women. They made new songs, they changed old songs, they carried songs from place to place, they resurrected and kept alive dying and forgotten old songs. . . . Ballad singers of centuries ago and mule-skinners alive and singing today helped make this book. Pioneers, pick and shovel men, teamsters, mountaineers, and people often called ignorant have their hands and voices in this book, along with minstrels, sophisticates, and trained musicians. People of lonesome hills and valleys are joined with 'the city slicker,' in the panorama of its pages."

In Sandburg's Songbag there are 280 of these songs and ballads, words and music. And playable music, too, arranged by such accomplished musicians as Mr. Alfred G. Wathall—you may have forgotten that he composed the music, when he was only nineteen, for George Ade's "The Sultan of Sulu"—Mr. Rupert Hughes, Miss Hazel Felman, Mr. Leo Sowerby, Mr. R. Emmet Kennedy, Mr. Henry Francis Parks, Mr. Arthur Farwell, and Mr. Henry Joslyn.

The songs are classified. There are "Dramas and Portraits," "The Ould Sod," "Minstrel Songs," "Tarnished Love Tales," "Frankie and Her Man," —there are two musical versions of "Frankie and Johnny" and one of "Frankie and Albert"— "Pioneer Memories," "Kentucky Blazing Star," "The Lincolns and Hankses," "Hobo Songs," "The Big Brutal City," "Prison and Jail Songs," "Blues, Mellows, Ballets," "Mexican Border Songs," "Picnic and Hayrack Follies," "Railroad and Work Gangs"—a beautiful version of "Casey Jones" by Kennedy and one of "Railroad Bill" by Wathall are in this sheaf—"Sailor Men," "Lovely People," "Road to Heaven," and others.

Among the songs that delighted me most was "In the Days of Old Rameses." They used to sing this in the early nineties in Chicago. The first stanza went:

> In the days of old Rameses, are you on, are you on?
> They told the same thing, the very same thing.
> In the days of old Rameses, that story had paresis,
> Are you on, are you on, are you on?

The rhyme demanded, of course, the penultimate accent in "Rameses" and "paresis," and to us who were brought up on that song it always seemed —it still seems—the most horrible affectation when anybody spoke of *Rame*ses or *Pare*sis.

But interesting as the songs themselves are, and good as the collection itself is, even better, to my notion, are Sandburg's semi-historical introductions to the songs. As, for instance, to "Casey Jones":

> At Dodge City, Kansas, in the Santa Fe railway station grass and flower plot, stands a plain memorial, a wooden post painted white with the reminder in black letters: Lest We Forget. Fastened to the post is an old-time, cast-iron Link-and-Pin, the slaughterer, the crepe hanger, the maker of one-armed men peddling lead pencils on payday night, the predecessor of the beneficent Safety Coupler. . . . The laughter of the railroad men at death and mutilation runs through many of his songs. The promise of a wooden kimona, a six-foot bungalow, is with him on every trip whether he's on a regular run or the extra list, and no matter what his seniority. . . . Verses sung by railroad men were printed in that remarkably American periodical, *The Railroad Man's Magazine*, under the editorship of Robert H. Davis. . . . The Leighton Brothers, artists and vaudevillians, built a Casey Jones song on earlier tunes and verses of folk song character; they gave it in their act for audiences. Then came the sheet music, widely popular. Lumberjacks, college girls, aviators, and doughboys have made versions of their own. . . . Songs are like people, animals, plants. They have genealogies, pedigrees, cross-breeds, mongrels, strays, and often a strange love-child. . . . The Casey Jones song may stem from several earlier pieces that have the same gait, freckles, disposition, color of hair and eyes. Among such earlier pieces are Brady, Why Didn't You Run? Jay Gould's Daughter, On the Charlie So Long, Vanderbilt's Daughter, Mama, Have You Heard the News? and all the earlier known songs in which figure Casey Jones, K. C. Jones, David Jones, and still other Joneses. . . . Two melodies are presented here. One is the traditional Casey Jones, the other is the lesser known Mama, Have You Heard the News? Some verses of the two songs are as interchangeable as a standard box car; others are narrow gauge and dinky.

A fascinating garland, "The American Songbag." It has been gathered with passionate reverence and loving enthusiasm. It is a vigorous job, done caressingly.

"Bernard Shaw should be gratified," says the *Manchester Guardian*, "by the news that the Lord Mayor elect of Guildford, a local solicitor, is son of the head waiter at a local hotel. So, with almost perfect precision, is one of the themes of 'You Never Can Tell' reproduced. In Mr. Shaw's play the son was a lawyer, too, though in the other branch of the law. And by a further coincidence the Christian name of the head waiter at Guildford is William, though he is known officially as 'Robert.' It will be remembered that Dolly insisted on calling the waiter in the play 'William.' The Guildford worthy has been recounting how he gave his boys a good education 'because that is of such importance to a man's career.' 'No, sir,' says the waiter in the play, 'not democracy; only education, sir. Scholarships, sir, Cambridge local, sir. Sidney Sussex College, sir.' "

Stanislaw Przybyszewski, noted Polish dramatist and novelist, who died recently, was born in 1868 and was the creator of the Polish modern theatre. Przybyszewski was classed as a dramatist of the first rank. He was author of "Chopin and Nietzsche." Although his plays enjoyed great success in Poland and Germany, he suffered need during and after the war.

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# Heine, the Doppelgänger

THAT MAN HEINE. By LEWIS BROWNE (in collaboration with Elsa Wiehl). The Macmillan Company. 1927.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

MR. LEWIS BROWNE, ably seconded by the researches of Elsa Wiehl, must be congratulated upon presenting to an English-reading audience a most interesting life of Heinrich Heine. Unfortunately, it is not *the* life of Heine. Errors in proportion and a certain casual (even slapdash) method of appraisal keep it from attaining the detachment, the deliberate refusal to simplify the man and his motives which is the quality of such biographies as Karpeles's and Wolff's. Mr. Browne has made his résumé not only easy but exciting to read. Yet, in his desire to speed up or enliven his narrative, he is guilty of lowering its tone. There are occasional hints of the "wise-cracking" which marred, to some at least, Dr. Durant's "The Story of Philosophy." Speaking of Heine's father, Mr. Browne writes: "He forgot the inviting actresses . . . slept dutifully at home —and in course of time became the father of four children." One waits for the vaudeville titter.

More serious is the very essence of the biographer's motive. Mr. Browne, too often, is a man with a thesis and, in order to give unity to sometimes disintegrated facts, he makes use of a leading theme. In "This Believing World" Mr. Browne simplified the varied and frequently contradictory aspects of comparative religion by underlining a theory that the base of all worship and exaltation is *fear*. Mr. Browne used this "fear *motif*" as regularly as the refrain of a ballad. In "That Man Heine" the mechanism is retained, taking the form "he did not *belong*." This dominating phrase occurs with a punctuality that would be convincing were it not quite so simple.

* * *

For, though it is true that much of Heine's unhappiness came from an inability to adjust his unstable self to a fluctuating environment, it was not that which characterizes and sets him apart from the poets. The lists are crowded with artists who "did not *belong*." Heine's central "difference" is no more to be ascertained by the peregrinations of his body, the shifting of places and professions, the exile in France, than Villon's or Keats'. The secret of the paradox lies in his attitude to his work; it can be found defensively in his poetry, offensively in his prose. The man who was a hack, a blackmailer, a braggart, a *schnorrer*, a cad, a *boulevardier*, a hitter-below-the-belt, and one of the three greatest lyricists who ever lived, can be explained only in his own terms. And such an explanation is forthcoming only after a detailed intimacy with *all* his kaleidoscopic writing. Even so lively a summary of it as Mr. Browne's fails to give although it suggests) the play of sentiment and scorn, the continual clash of sensitive pity and coarse humor, the incredible combination of ecstasy, impudence, grace, crudity, pathos, and spleen which was the flickering, self-tortured spirit of Heine. There was a dichotomy in the poet apparent to his earliest biographers, in fact to every one except the woman he lived with more than twenty years. His physical life, with its exaggerations of promiscuity, possessiveness, and arrogance, moved in the limbo of a fictional romanticism; it was only in his writing that he projected himself into reality.

* * *

Here was a man whose "Buch der Liebe" became a lover's text-book and to whom love was a poison; a man whom it was dangerous to have for an enemy and (as in the shameful episode of Ludwig Börne) ten times more perilous to have for a friend, a man who, time and again, would sell his birthright for sensation and his tender idealism for a cruel epigram. And, nevertheless, a man of such personal charm that the insulted and the injured capitulated to his mere presence. Clearly such an emanation cannot be disposed of as an escapist's fear or (as Mr. Browne implies when he reaches the "mattress grave" period that marked the eight years' slow death) that Heine was the battleground in which Mephisto was finally routed by the Nazarene. It is too pat, too smooth a cadence. Thus the death-scene: "His exile was ended, he was at home at last—he *belonged*." No; Heine who suffered much without complaint, would scarcely forgive that!

For all this reviewer's dislike of Mr. Browne's misleading *leit motif*, his story *qua* story fascinates. It moves with a minimum of creaking; the facts are established without burying the reader in dust; the chief *dramatis personæ* enter and exit with a novelist's dispatch. And the tale is salted with enough badinage to keep the lightest commuter amused. Many of Heine's keenest epigrams are here and, among the most famous sallies, are several which, though rarely quoted, rank among his best. "I have become a regular Christian," he informed his friend Moser, "I dine in the homes of rich Jews!" When he was near his end, so ill that his diet was restricted to greens (which led him to speak of himself as Nebuchadnezar the Second) a friend asked, "Are you really incurable?" "No," Heine replied, "I shall die some day." His sojourn in London brought forth what must be counted his most playful and yet most self-revealing witticism:

> An Englishman loves liberty as he loves his lawfully wedded wife: he regards her as a possession, and though he may not treat her with especial tenderness, he knows how to defend her if need be. A Frenchman loves liberty as he does his beloved bride: he will commit a thousand follies for her sake. But a German loves liberty as he does his old grandmother. . . . Yet one can never tell how things may turn out in the end. The grumpy Englishman, in an ill temper with his wife, is capable of some day putting a rope around her neck. The fickle Frenchman may become unfaithful to his adored one, and be seen fluttering about in the Palais Royal in pursuit of another. But the German will never quite abandon his old grandmother. He will always keep a nook by the chimney-corner for her, where she can tell fairy-tales to the listening children.

As a whole, the documentation is excellent. There are minor inaccuracies. *Schmerzen* is spelled *Schmertzen* throughout. Among the composers who have put Heine's poems to music, Mr. Browne mentions Wagner who, unless Mr. Browne knows of some unpublished manuscript, never set one of Heine's lyrics), but not a reference to Robert Franz, who set sixty of the Lieder, or Brahms or Strauss or Liszt or Jensen or Hugo Wolff. And, once in a while, Mr. Browne allows himself such un-English equivalents as "grandness" instead of "grandeur" and "temeritous," which seems a rather stilted way of saying "intrepid." But the speech is usually as fluent as the tale it tells. And that, as has been maintained in the course of this somewhat grudging review, is Mr. Browne's chief concern—as it will be his reader's.

# The Negro in Drama

PLAYS OF NEGRO LIFE. Edited by ALAIN LOCKE and MONTGOMERY GREGORY with a Chronology and Bibliography of Negro Drama. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1927. $5.

Reviewed by DUBOSE HEYWARD

Author of "Porgy"

LATE in 1925 a volume of far-reaching significance was published. That volume was "The New Negro" and was the direct result of brilliant and creative editorship on the part of Alain Locke. Standing as an exhibit of accomplishment by the Negro race in America, it had the entire field of literary and artistic endeavor from which to draw. Within the space of a single tightly packed volume was included the dynamic prose of Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, the mordant style of Walter White, the artistic detachment of James Weldon Johnson, and, in addition to much other interesting material, the most signal literary achievement of the new Negro in America in the group of young poets, Cullen, Hughes, McKay, and others.

In that volume of significance and scope there was also a section devoted to the Negro in Drama. Now comes a book of substantial proportions which is the logical offspring of the earlier volume, and which essays to treat exhaustively the specialized field of drama. Mr. Locke, working in this instance with the collaboration of Professor Montgomery Gregory, former instructor in dramatics at Howard University, has again acquitted himself brilliantly. With rare discretion the editors of "Plays of Negro Life" have shifted the stress from the Negro *writer* (as in the former book) to the *Negro Race* as a subject for dramatic art. In the first place this gives them the work of white dramatists who have approached the subject seriously, upon which to draw. In the second place it lifts the material treated to a plane of pure art, available to the American dramatist, white or Negro, as native subject matter; thus freeing it from the imputation of race propaganda. This far-visioned viewpoint is the keynote of the brief but comprehensive introductory note. As a reviewer, on the one hand, and a writer upon the Negro, on the other, I find it both a gracious and a peculiarly disarming gesture.

The contents of a volume that includes examples of the best work of Eugene O'Neill, Paul Green, and Ridgley Torrence, as well as some promising, but sophomoric, playwriting by the group at Howard University, is certain to be extremely uneven in quality. And yet, in spite of the ineptitudes of some of the young playwrights in this most exacting medium, there is a sincerity, a feeling for rhythm, and a new zeal for the humble origins of their own race that hold high promise for the future.

* * *

In a brief review of "Plays of Negro Life" it would be futile as well as misleading to attempt comment on each of the twenty-three plays that are included. It is not as a collection of separate examples that the book attains its undeniable importance, but as a closely knit, permanent record of the initial phase of the Negro Theatre in America. So rapid has been the development of this department of our national drama that one is surprised to find that it was as recently as 1917 that the three plays, "Granny Maumee," "The Rider of Dreams," and "Simon the Cyrenian," written by Ridgley Torrence and presented at the Garden Theatre, ushered in the new movement. The first two of these plays are included in the book. Eugene O'Neill is represented by "The Dreamy Kid" and "The Emperor Jones." Ernest Howard Culbertson, the author of "Goat Alley," is spoken for by a shorter play, "Rackey." John William Rodgers, Jr., has contributed his one-act drama, "Judge Lynch," with which the Dallas Little Theatre captured the Belasco Cup in 1924. And Paul Green has given "The No 'Count Boy" with which the Texas players again won the National Little Theatre prize in 1925. "White Dresses," and "In Abraham's Bosom," the one-act play from which his nine-scene biography was later elaborated, to capture the Pulitz Prize of last year. The student of drama will find a comparison of this short version with the longer one, as presented at the Provincetown Playhouse, an unusually interesting experience. It is one of those rare instances in which a one-act play has been improved by expansion.

* * *

A potent influence in the development of the Negro playwright has been the annual contests conducted by *Opportunity, A Journal of Negro Life*. As an evidence of the success of these contests, the winning plays, which are included in the volume, are, taken as a group, the best work by members of the race concerned. These plays are "Sugar Cane," by Frank H. Wilson; "Cruiter," by John Matheus; "The Starter," by Eulalie Spence, and "Plumes," by Georgia Douglas Johnson. Of these prizewinners, I feel that "Sugar Cane" has attained to a higher degree than the others the indispensable and elusive element of suspense. The explanation of this is obvious: Frank H. Wilson has been familiar with the stage from his boyhood. His play contrasts interestingly with "Balo," by Jean Toomer, which possesses a fine, simple folk quality, but lacks the conflict which is needed to make it a play.

The volume is interestingly illustrated with portraits and scenes from the plays and with decorations by Aaron Douglas. A Chronology of the Negro Theatre, by Montgomery Gregory, and a Bibliography of Negro Drama complete the rich source-book for anyone who is interested in its subcontents and make the volume an indispensable ject.

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# A Group of Noble Dames

CALAMITY JANE AND THE LADY WILDCATS. By DUNCAN AIKMAN. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1927. $3.

Reviewed by THOMAS BEER
Author of "The Mauve Decade"

TO go collecting raw materials in American history is to learn that Americans are a set of humorless prigs, but the pursuit is wholesome and necessary. Our history, a kind of postage stamp affixed to an unwieldy parcel indistinctly addressed, is still anecdotal, an affair of the foreground, a few impulses and beliefs flooding among small groups and personalities. Mr. Lewis Mumford has done what a fine talent can to trace the rhythms and to mark out some trifles of distinguished thinking in this muddle, and others have gayly or furiously lumped together notes which will be used, one day, by somebody who might perhaps begin to shave in the year 2027. Mr. Duncan Aikman comes in with the newest baggage of disillusioned anecdotes and offers a hard, plausible theory. He has never been a credulous person and is now, probably, vitrified against legend. And he has not been obliged to agonize while pursuing the virtuous through the reports of their friends, for his amusing book deals with hussies.

But the lady wildcats are not particularly bad women. They seem to have been under an influence of the Concord philosophers. Calamity Jane spent much of her infancy in strictest Thoreauvian contacts with nature. She had no "smug arts with which to please the Bostonians" and her famous witticism, "Who's the distinguished dirty dog you're feedin' that nice chow to?" was pitched at a graduate of Harvard. She had no "pact with smoothness, ease, or evasive dissimulation" and she was always willing to attack some great decorum, some fetich or policeman. Cattle Kate, a weaker nature, gave all to love—his name was Averell—and did her best with Emerson's injunction about refusing nothing—fame, credit, plans, and the rest of the quotation. She was lynched with her paramour in the days when the half gods of the frontier were going and the gods of the cinema had not yet arrived. In Belle Starr, whose prose style prophesies the moving sweetness of Mr. Santayana's early method, one perceives a misunderstanding of eclecticism and a derailment of the will to power, straightened out finally by the lout who shot her from the saddle and filled her with bullets as she lay on the dust. But in Bridget Grant, who provided sailors for ships bound out from Portland and Astoria, you see the model of Bronson Alcott's womanhood, a fanatic on education, a teetotaler, a mother above all things, and one "framed rather for domestic sentiment than for the gaze and heartlessness of what is falsely called society." Mr. Aikman, here, corrects a wrong impression of Portland's queen of the shanghai gangs. I had known that Mrs. Grant had merits but her false reputation had obscured some of them. She died, immensely respected, in 1923 at the age of ninety-two. This seems just, as we see justice, and it tastes well at the end of Mr. Aikman's book, because his other loud women suffered indecently, considering their fine qualities and their general harmlessness. For I can see not much difference between the lady wildcats and eminences whose names we are invited to respect. If it is not right to sell men to sea captains for a small fee, it is not right to infect men, through printed books, with the ideational syphilis of low egotism and self pity, at two dollars the volume. Madame Moustache, polite and modest in her gambling hells, never undertook to be the public rhapsodist of a faked medical discovery. Calamity Jane in her cups was given to lying about her own valors, but Mr. Aikman does not tell us that she ever promoted international discord by prophesying that France was about to overwhelm Europe with negroid battalions recruited in Africa or altered the history of American education, *pour le bon motif*, by expelling William Graham Sumner from Yale. Belle Starr, prudishly inspected, was a thief and a virago. I prefer her, at that, to a man who will capitalize the legend of Jesus Christ for another "arraignment of society," and sell the serial rights to the most profitable of American monthlies. Pearl Hart had not the intelligence of a chambermaid, but at least she had loyalty and generosity to recommend her to one's sentiment. Now, in Washington. . . . But it does not matter.

Calamity Jane—Martha Jane Canary—has the longest sketch in Mr. Aikman's gay dissertation on the pioneer legend, but not the best. He is obliged to spend too many paragraphs discounting the buncombe in which Calam' and her friends wrapped her amusing character and his theme gets clumsy, now and then. It appears that her tendency to the profane was rather by way of heredity and not a personal acquirement. My sedate grandfather used to recite the beginnings of her streaming objurgations and then sketch in the climax and the conclusion by rapid movements of a thumb. We swear so dully in these times that a few more elaborate quotations from Calamity would have helped out our younger dramatists and novelists. Mr. Aikman leaves to Calam' her reputations as a hard drinker and swearer but explodes her pretensions as the rescuer of stage coaches, the mistress of Wild Bill, the slayer of Crazy Horse, the daring scout and railroad builder. She was a natural product of environments, the drifting daughter of a tough woman and a shiftless man, born in rude Missouri and matured in the mad Virginia City of the '60s, the town in which hung, over the bar of a lewd dance hall, our one famous American epitaph:

> Here lies the body of Charlotte McGinnity,
> To the age of sixteen years she kept her virginity,
> Damned good record for this vicinity.

Martha Jane Canary just about equaled the record and then became a heterodox, noisy friend to the lonesome. Her fame, Mr. Aikman determines, is largely due to the fact that nobody killed her and she had time to become a legend and to enjoy that legend. She died, more or less drunk, in 1903 and was buried in Deadwood by the Methodists. She meant nothing, but she seems to have deserved the plea raised by Miss Brice for the Lady of the Camellias: she was good company.

The Californian adventure of Lola Montez gives Mr. Aikman something more definite to examine and record. I hope his book will travel far enough to stop any more novelists and manufacturers of the moving picture from solemnly posing Lola as a wronged woman on whom a group of devotees wanted to confer an imperial crown of California. Mr. Minnigerode sniffed at this myth some time since without killing it. The Montez, as a fact, was the pioneer of all those ladies in the nineteenth century and our own incredible period who would be at once reckless, outrageous, and yet somehow "pure." She was an ordinary exhibitionist. Her two famous dances were described in liberal Paris as "simulations of a public orgasm." She was beautiful, humorless, and crude. Arriving in California, her brainless vanity made her offensive after a few months even in a sexually starved community. Mr. Aikman's description is painful. She goes to sulk in the country, aware that she has become a joke, and her mania for public notice makes her ridiculous to the roughs of a tiny settlement. She goes back to dance again and tries to hitch her tarnished star to the Know Nothing agitation, calling her critics Jesuits and in "league with corrupt powers," and "mercenary." People were always wronging Lola. It got to be tedious. Spiritualism, charities, and belated assertions of chastity filled up her last years. The comet extinguished itself in the dreary, familiar way. She was, I feel, a "publicity pig" of the exasperating kind, unable to conserve sensibly what her eighteen months in Bavaria and her vogue in Paris got for her. Yet, pragmatically considered, she was a useful citizen. Her horsewhips, her tame bear, her inessential marriages, and her bragging of noble aims all showed girls of the next generations how these things are done, and her soul goes marching on.

Mr. Aikman comes back in half a dozen episodes to his theory. The women of the pioneer epoch—say, from 1840 to 1890—had their feet planted on a resonant drum of man's sexual necessity. They could choose the measure of the dance and the amount of noise to be exacted from creatures in a state of animal tension. Wifehood, polyandry, and an excused rapacity were open to the shrewd. But the consequences were odd and not so funny. ". . . in the long run," says Mr. Aikman, "the atmosphere of adulation and constant curiosity in which women lived in the west as a sex made it almost as difficult for a good woman to restrain her goodness as for Calamity Jane to content herself with being innocently hoydenish. . . ." In his note on Carrie Nation he concludes: "Symbolizing in herself and her spectacular conduct the release of so many popular urges and demi-urges, she was automatically carried onward and upward to prominence, the lecture platform, and eventually into paresis." (Like that of the destructive European philosopher so distrusted by American moralists, Mrs. Nation's career had a spirochetic inflection at its end). "Yet, as a frontier woman exercising a frontier woman's peculiar prerogatives, she essentially created that destiny herself. . . . Or should one not say that the frontier created it for her by its astonishing fiction that a lady, whether a strumpet in delirium tremens or a virago in a fit of moral hysteria, could do no wrong?" Beyond this he might run to an analysis of the virtuous Western woman's revolt in the '80s and '90s when vice was still memorably public on the plains and any good woman knew plentifully that sluts in the dance halls down the street or six miles from the hot kitchen of the farmhouse were having a roaring good time of it. She knew this, coarsely and emphatically, and her method of changing the situation was what environment had taught her. When she took to campaigns for righteousness she lied—and taught her Eastern cousins how to lie—as rankly as ever did Calam' and Kitty the Schemer. But I don't suppose that the white-haired, charming lady who, some six months back, announced herself before a legislative committee as the "delegate of a million American mothers and a million homes" ever thought of herself as a sister to the soiled harridan drawling out nonsense in Billings and Gilt Edge thirty years ago. It is not important, but how we idealists suffer in discovering that man, this "species of ape afflicted by megalomania" is descended from a mother as well as a father.

There is no such thing as a "man's world." Some whimpering invert must have made the battered phrase. Certainly the old West was not a man's world. The companions of these "men of desperate fortunes and wild ambitions"—thanks, Mr. Gibbon—had their chances and their successes, too. Mr. Aikman's comedy in baroque has the merit of telling what did happen, in preference to what might have happened or what—in the manner of so many American social studies—never has happened. His cheerful revelations may hurt the few romantics left in criticism but, after all, he is just displaying a group of human beings who, if you think, seem no more ignoble than the rest of us.

One of the numerous illustrations in Duncan Aikman's "Calamity Jane"

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# An Age of Essays

ESSAYS. By LEONARD WOOLF. New York. Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1927. $2.50.
OPEN HOUSE, A BOOK OF ESSAYS. By J. H. PRIESTLEY. New York: Harper & Bros. 1927. $2.50.
STUDIES IN THE CONTEMPORARY THEATRE. By JOHN PALMER. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1927. $2.75.
OPINIONS. By CLAUDE WASHBURN. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1927.
MORE CONTEMPORARY AMERICANS. By PERCY HOLMES BOYNTON. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1927. $2.50.
WHAT'S AHEAD; AND MEANWHILE. By EDWARD S. MARTIN. New York: Harper & Bros. 1927. $2.50.
HARPER ESSAYS. By HENRY SEIDEL CANBY. New York: Harper & Bros. 1927. 2.50.

Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON

WE seem to be entering an age of essays. Every year sees a larger number than the last of volumes called Guesses, Interpretations, Opinions, Studies, Points of View, or the like. Most of the material has appeared first in periodicals, and from those green fields of ephemeral community has been gathered into sheaves. Evidently there is a public which likes essays; it even likes essays in literary criticism; but especially it likes discussion of the social phenomena of the day, which lift above the horizon their importunate heads, asking to be shaped and understood. The air is full of discussion, or argument and rebuttal. We are hurrying to take stock and revalue our wares. Price labels are being changed in a quite bewildering manner. In some shops the prices of old fashioned and supposedly standard goods are being cut to the verge of a bankruptcy sale.

Of the six essayists before us three are English and three are American. In respect to the prevalent expectation that an Englishman will write in better style than an American, it does not seem to be fulfilled in this case. The three Englishmen are mainly concerned with literary subjects, the three Americans with social, but they are all competent practitioners of the art of writing, in good control of their ideas and means of expression. Mr. Woolf and Mr. Priestley are London men and their outlook is on the world of London. Mr. Palmer is dramatic critic on the London *Saturday Review*, but his outlook is European. Mr. Washburn is an American resident in Italy and his outlook is international. Mr. Boynton is an American altogether concerned with things American. Mr. Martin is known to us all and needs no introduction. The Harper essays are selected from a decade and a half of *Harper's Monthly*.

* * *

Mr. Woolf is a writer of force and substance. If his essays on literature have more of those qualities than those on history and politics, it is presumably because he has given himself more to the study of literature than to anything else. That he happens to be the husband of the most brilliant woman writer in England is no occasion for comparison. He is himself one of the best critics there, vigorous, outspoken, and independent. Naturally I put to his credit that most of his impressions of literature, as well as history and politics, are rather similar to mine, but there are some exceptions. I share his personal liking for Ben Jonson, the man and the writer, with less than his enthusiasm for Jonson's plays; which are less read than Mr. Woolf thinks they should be because—as it seems to me—the tragedies are dull and the comedites rather artful mechanisms peopled with artful mechanisms that will not bleed if you prick them. Nor should I with Mr. Woolf feel more at home talking with Ben than with Samuel Johnson, nor think myself for that reason less a partaker of the twentieth century. The early seventeenth century is not really more "modern" than the later eighteenth. It is a yes-and-no proposition. Mr. Woolf thinks Ben Franklin must have been a great bore, especially in his old age. I should think he must have been endlessly entertaining and the evidence of his contemporaries is all to that effect. The reminiscences of the old are usually less boring than the prophecies of the young. The two Jo(h)nsons were fundamentally alike, burly brutes whom none could wish otherwise, but the two Ben's were worlds apart. There was no poetry in the later Ben, but there was wit and wisdo mand tranquillity. It is literary snobbery to assume poets and poetry more interesting than scientists and science or than men of affairs and the gossip of the great world. Interesting to whom?

If Mr. Woolf is an essayist somewhat of the type of Hazlitt, Mr. Priestley seems to follow in the footsteps of Lamb. "In Crimson Silk" and "The Berkshire Beasts" are almost Lamb-like essays, something of that happy fancy with a touch of spring about it, something fresh and fragrant to remind one how good it is to be young, to bubble with spontaneous ideas and watch them flow off one's pen fluid and shining. Perhaps that is not the way they come, but that is the way they look from this end of their appearance.

* * *

Mr. Palmer has a thesis to maintain, namely, the very recent renaissance of the French drama. "A critic who twenty years ago set out to write a book about the contemporary theatre might quite reasonably have ignored Paris altogether." Substantially, before the war, it was a city of minor importance in the drama. Berlin and Moscow were leading the way in the arts of production, and the dramatic authors who expressed that generation were German, Russian, Scandinavian, and English. But the situation has changed. Except for a chapter on "Pirandello and the Enigma of Personality" as the most distinct influence from outside, Mr. Palmer concerns himself wholly with this new Parisian phenomenon, specifically with five French playwrights, all young and post-bellum: "Lenormand and the Play of Psychoanalysis;" "Bernard and the Theory of Silence;" "Sarment and the New Romance;" the satirical plays of Jules Romaine; "Geraldy and the Play of Sex;" and one Russian theatrical producer, Georges Pitoeff, who is now settled in Paris. All these six names are as unfamiliar to me as they probably are to most Americans, and whether Mr. Palmer is right or wrong in his opinion of their importance there is no material at hand for judging; but from his account of the matter one would infer that it is the familiar phenomenon of ideas or movements starting elsewhere than in France but taking at least their most distinct form and emphasis in Paris.

Mr. Washburn's initial essay is a defense of living abroad, but the defense seems only half hearted and abounds in candid admissions. Indeed he is a clear-eyed observer, calm and aloof. The three essays, "Zenith," "Truth and Fiction in Italy," "The French," are worth buying the whole book to read.

On a visit to the middle western city familiar to his early life and presumably a Zenith like Mr. Lewis's, he found that Mr. Lewis had missed the most significant parts of it. There was a Babbitt group, but Mr. Washburn happened to see very little of it. He noticed examples of it here and there, and admired Mr. Lewis's accuracy. The people he met, however, at dinner and country clubs were a well-bred, well read and mainly well-to-do society of professional and business men, their wives and sons and daughters, for the most part traveled and college bred, quite suave and graceful, polite, and thoroughly civilized. They had charm and they were beautifully sure of themselves. But he would not care to live in Zenith, for it was an immensely conventional society both morally and mentally. The two sexes seemed to have very little in common. The men knew only one thing thoroughly; their business; the women knew nothing thoroughly and —still more—nothing passionally. In the matter of emotions Zenith was uncannily cool.

* * *

Contemporary Italian fiction does not, Mr. Washburn says, represent Italian life. The spirit of the race is young, vivid, almost raw. It is not a country of dreamers and idealists. It is of the rather hard headed and practical. The cause of the discrepancy is a literary convention. This mournful emasculated prose goes back to the schools. "The prose style of the average mature Italian or of Italian journalism is hopelessly verbose, weighted with rhetorical emotional platitudes that do not express the genuine feelings of the writer," because he was methodically taught in his childhood to write that way. "To an Italian life is pragmatic, art academic." About "The French" he balances two divergent opinions, and confesses to holding them both and to be unable to reconcile them. These essays are, I believe, posthumous. It is the more regrettable, for Mr. Washburn was a writer of distinction and should have made his mark.

These later and graver essays by Mr. Martin, from his Easy Chair at *Harper's*, do not seem so perfectly to his manner born as when we know him of old in the pages of *Life*. The same sunny tolerance and graceful moderation, applied to a more difficult, perhaps a grimmer era, and as contrasted with the outspoken and more rugged vigor of some of the younger men, impress one as not quite competent to the subjects to which it is applied.

I must confess also to a shade of disappointment in the "Harper Essays" due to an expectation raised too high by the list of the essayists and by an antecedent impression that *Harper's Magazine* had risen of late to be, on the whole, the ablest of our literary monthlies. The volume is readable and interesting, but not distinguished. Henry James's involutions of style delicately tiptoeing about the Great War seem curiously out of place. Mark Twain's "The Death of Jean" is hardly an essay. Mahan, Burroughs, Beebe, Belloc, Arnold Bennett, Galsworthy, Lounsbury—we seen to know them and better on a larger scale. Yet each of the essays is a direct vision of some reality. The best and briefest analysis that I know of the situation that underlies the phenomenon which this collection manifests, the general lack of what Mr. Brownell calls "style" and which I prefer here to call "distinction," is the essay on "Fame" by Henry Mills Alden, Editor of *Harper's* for a generation preceeding this decade and a half. It is too condensed to be summed up, and it has distinction of thought if not of manner. Mr. Harrison Rhodes's study of Boston or Mr. Simeon Strunsky's of a New York night are good essays, but the only essays which seem to me to attain this "distinction" are by Professor Genung, Frank Moore Colby, Alden, and Howells. Howells's "Tolstoy" is a pæan of grateful adoration, and the charm of it lies in that rush of hot feeling unusual to his facile pen. Critically, Howells is here, as always, drowned in his dogma of realism, whereas Alden although swimming in the faith, keeps his head above it.

* * *

Mr. Boynton's volume is composed in architectural symmetry: a general essay at either end and two in the middle, and each side of the two central pillars are placed three criticisms of individual writers; three for the last generation of men who wrote before their proper time, Melville, Hearn, and Bierce; three for the present of men who are obviously spokesmen of the moment, Hergesheimer, Anderson, and Lewis. The balance is perfect. The chief interest of the volume, however, lies in the four general essays—"Winds of Criticism," "The College Insurgents," "Public and the Reading Public," and "Democracy and Public Taste." For the problem we are all most interested in today is how to understand our world as in our time; more intently interested than formerly because we realize that we have entered a new era; we are agog to understand what it is like, what its varied phenomena signify; and Mr. Boynton's four essays constitute together one of the best presentations that I have met with of some of its important phases.

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Bernard Shaw, says the *Manchester Guardian*, consented for the first time a few weeks ago to attend a show of films and to speak. Among the films which Mr. Shaw was to "introduce" are some studies of the growth of flowers and a remarkable microscopic picture showing the growth of green mould on cheese, as well as some records of bird and insect life. For some years a small band of enthusiasts have been producing these interesting studies, which need the greatest care and patience to produce, but their work has not received much recognition. Shaw, with his usual thoroughness, visited the studios at Surbiton where these pictures are made, before consenting to talk about them. It is quite needless to say that he has strong views about the kinema—I understand that, for instance, he holds that make-up is unnecessary in acting for the screen."

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Jane Austen (notes the London *Mercury*) mentions in "Northanger Abbey" the names of seven "horrid" novels. These novels are today very scarce, and several of them are not to be found even at the British Museum. The "horrid" novels include "The Necromancer," "The Castle of Wolfenbach," "The Midnight Bell," and "The Orphan of the Rhine," and it will be seen that they minister to the modern taste both for shockers and for antiques. A reprint of them is now being brought out in England under the editorship of Montague Summers. The books will be published at the rate of one title a month.

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# A Book of Challenges

MEN OF DESTINY. By WALTER LIPPMANN. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

WALTER LIPPMANN'S "Men of Destiny" may well have been called "a book of challenges." In a day of change any challenge is important and in these days, institutions, ideals, reality itself—all are in a state of flux. A scientist in an apron standing over a test-tube in a laboratory cannot go on making important discoveries about the nature of the atom without finally affecting life as it is lived by the man in the street. And during the decade now approaching its close this man in an apron, before his test-tubes has probed into the atom so far that we know too much about it for the comfort of our old ideals of truth. We know that the atom is finally motion plus mystery. And the gentle Einstein has gone the other way out from the atom into illimitable space and into unthinkably vast distances, and has come back with the disconcerting information that things are not what they seem there; certainly not what they seemed to Sir Isaac Newton who with his contemporaries established laws which overthrew monarchies and paved the way for democracy. Einstein seems to have challenged our tight reality in illimitable space as the laboratory scientists have challenged reality at the infinitesimal apexes of the heart of things. That being so, inevitably men in institutions must change and mend their ways.

Walter Lippmann's book of challenges is not what its title would lead the unwarned reader to believe. It is not a series of character sketches of the men whose names appear in its table of contents, for instance,—Al Smith, Calvin Coolidge, Bryan, Mencken, Sinclair Lewis, Harding, McAdoo, Kellogg, and the rest. Herein one will find no irrelevant details about the externals of the personalities listed for discussion. Yet despite the fact that these sketches are not bristling with hen-minded details they are nevertheless largely interpretative of the men and their place in the American picture. For instance, and this is a notable if not the best instance, Mr. Lippmann discusses "Bryan and the dogma of majority rule." He pins his discussion to the Dayton anti-evolution trial as the episodical place of departure from which he discusses Bryan as an American statesman. There is precious little biographical material about Bryan in the essay, yet in the philosophical challenge of the dogma of majority rule Mr. Lippmann discusses all that is worth considering about William Jennings Bryan. One will not learn in this discussion that Mr. Bryan carried a palm-leaf fan, had a figure like an old-fashioned gin bottle, ate himself into an early grave, wore baggy trousers, and had big feet. Instead one will learn that in his career Bryan proceeded upon the theory that there was a divine sanction for the theory that fifty-one per cent of any group agreeing upon a proposition was speaking the voice of God. Bryan never questioned that theory. Mr. Lippmann not merely denies it and challenges it, he scoffs at it and disproves it. So must the world in the coming century reject the dogma which was the cornerstone upon which Bryan builded his life. In three sentences Mr. Lippmann disposes of the theory upon which the Fathers of the Republic built this democracy. "The spiritual doctrine that all men should stand at last equal before the throne of God meant to Bryan that all men are equally good biologists before the ballot box of Tennessee. That kind of democracy is evidently a gross materialization of an idea that in essence cannot be materialized. It is a confusing interchange of two worlds that are not interchangeable."

In his consideration of Mr. Henry L. Mencken Mr. Lippmann is as ruthless as he is with Mr. Bryan. Thus:

"What Mr. Mencken desires is in substance the distinction, the sense of honor, the chivalry, and the competence of ideal organizing combined with the liberty of ideal democracy. . . .The most difficulty in democratic society arises out of the increasing practice of liberty. Mr. Mencken is foremost among those who cry for more liberty and who use that liberty to destroy what is left of the older tradition. . . . I am amazed that he does not see how fundamentally the spiritual disorder he fights against is the effect of that régime of liberty he fights for. . . . He claims too much when he says that he is engaged in a diagnosis of the democratic disease. He has merely described with great emphasis the awful pain it gives him."

"Men of Destiny" is no book to wrap up with a box of chocolates and take out to while away a dull evening with a palavering flapper. It is a serious book to be considered prayerfully by those who stand baffled before the problems of the modern world and our American section of it. Mr. Lippmann has contributed much to the discussion of modern politics. He has given his readers nothing better than "Men of Destiny." The jacket of the book declares that "the cartoons by Mr. Rollin Kirby lend force as well as charm to the volume." They do, and more. They add gay pictured persiflage to some otherwise disquieting conclusions. They make the reader grin 'mid the encircling gloom which is about the most salutary service a man can do to his fellows in these bewildering days.

# Warrior Emperor

GENGHIS KHAN, THE EMPEROR OF ALL MEN. By HAROLD LAMB. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co. 1927. $3.50.

Reviewed by FREDERICK WELLS WILLIAMS
Yale University

MR. LAMB has done a service to his generation. He has brought to life in the pages of a thoroughly readable book the career of a warrior whose place in history has thus far been fixed for us by the hostile accounts of three great groups of enemies whom he overthrew—Chinese, Arabic-Persian, and European. All of these have their historians imbued with racial and religious prejudice, while the congeners of the great Mongol, being without a literature, have left only folk-tales about the world's most appalling catastrophe. The author appears to have covered the available material on his subject with proper consideration, though aware of sources yet to be uncovered, notable among which are some fifty thousand documents in the Vatican recently discovered that may possibly reveal matter of importance. There is also a translation by the late Professor Douglas of Yuan Dynasty histories which he has not used for data on the campaigns in China.

For his purpose, however, he is justified in presenting a clear account of the tragedy of the Mongol eruption of the thirteenth century rather than a scholarly dissection of all the source material thus far unearthed. In his treatment of Jenghiz's dreams and of his alleged interest in Christianity—a report attributed to the Nestorians—he is entirely sound; in identifying Toghrul the Wang Khan with Prester John of legend he seems to credit Marco Polo's gossip without heeding Yule's careful analysis of the tale in his "Cathay and the Way." It is a highly controversial point, but he might have been less fearless where the wisest fear to tread. The reproductions in the volume of Persian paintings and French engravings are picturesque but chiefly interesting as a proof that artists in Asia and Europe alike have ever relied upon imagination for their facts. If the necessary objective of history is to kindle imagination while preserving it from the fanciful and unreal it seems a pity that a first-rate work like this should embody anything that may be subject to misinterpretation.

Jenghiz—a better spelling than the conventional form which the author adopts and quite as authoritative—was, as Curtin calls him, "perhaps the greatest character of history that has appeared in the world." In the West his name for three centuries was a bugaboo, for three more it became a by-word; but however we dislike him he deserves more attention than the light-hearted masters of the waves on the Mediterranean have ever given him. Powerful both of body and mind, with incredible will and utter singleness of purpose, he was a strange and terrible figure, great beyond all others yet with a greatness that was not good for the world we live in. In the world of Asia, however, he was understood. He destroyed, but the measure of his slaughters was not always accounted against him by those who survived and found opportunities to follow accustomed ways as best they could under his control, for that control was more efficient than any of his predecessors had established. By adjusting our point of view it is possible to mitigate some of the prejudices of our race and training and estimate the man as one belonging to another sphere where our ideas of altruism and mercy had never been evolved. The old-fashioned moral question as to his being a curse or a help to civilization need not concern us today. The consequences of his personal activities are less calculable than those of any warrior in recorded history, and for them there is no more praise or blame to his account than can be found in any barbarian assault. His was the law of the jungle. It is his transcendent ability as a leader that is spectacular—the fact that he was successful in whatever he undertook. But the significance of his career seems to lie not so much in the spearhead as in the potential that created and propelled the weapon. Jenghiz epitomized the genius of his people for leadership, for direct action. As Scythians, Huns, Tartars, and the rest they have frightened or overwhelmed civilized peoples since civilization began; after their conquests they have merged into the culture groups of their victims or have disappeared behind the great steppes to preserve their barbaric integrity. The outside world seems to have grown old to keep the stock young, to renew the secular process of impact, destruction, and absorption until equilibrium between culture and energy was restored. The procedure suggests earth-movements and the geologic history of our globe.

Upon the most notorious aspect of Jenghiz's repute, his ferocity, Mr. Lamb says almost nothing. He errs on the right side, for Western accounts dwell upon little else. After acknowledging that he was a brute and a barbarian we must face the question, why did he not meet the usual fate of the savage and his works? Was there plan or reason in his brutality? Other successful savages in the world's history have left no enduring kingdoms. He exterminated peoples and places—perhaps forty million human beings and a thousand towns—but he restored vitality to Asia and dynasties descended from his breed lasted for centuries. No record remains of his theory of conquest; we do not know if, like Caesar's, it was original and profound; we can only say that he emerged from the wilderness of Siberia to annihilate opposition and turn thriving countries into wastes. If we suppose from this that he was simply a type of primitive animal how can we account for his care in training sons and generals for completing his work? for employing skilled artisans snatched from massacres to build anew the culture of the East? for the art and excellence of that culture when it arose again in the capitals of his successors, Peking, Samarkand, Delhi, and Ispahan? Unless we accept the discarded doctrine of Divine interference in human affairs we shall have to see in Jenghiz himself an indomitable soul indeed, trained in hardships, inspired by a passion for power, untouched by spiritual hopes or fears, careless of opinion or tradition embodiment of elemental forces belongin race. And in these forces were some stituents of a renaissance which his nized and set in motion. With the barrier of Persian powers—P Seljuks, and the rest—that had from the Roman Empire an check in the advance of Isl after the paralysis of its cult ters in Middle Asia. For very slowly and irresolutely medievalism that prescribed tion for itself.

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# The Social Pyramid

SOCIAL MOBILITY. By PITIRIM SOROKIN. New York: Harper & Bros. 1927. $3.75.

Reviewed by ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON

IF the Russian Revolution had done nothing more than send to us Professor Sorokin of the University of Minnesota, we should owe it a large debt. It appears, to be sure, to have stamped him with an almost indelible tendency to deny that there is any such thing as progress—but in "Social Mobility" this is relieved by a spirit of vivacity and humor which causes him to interrupt a final prediction of dire and speedy disaster for America by remarking that "the writer too much likes the mobile type of society to prophesy its funeral." This sentence illustrates not only Professor Sorokin's spirit, but his clear, rythmical English with its frequent little departures from our exact idioms.

Most sociological writers speak as if every institution and individual were glued into place. Professor Sorokin goes to the opposite extreme, and devotes page after page to proving that everything is in a state of flux. Not only do nations rise and fall, but so do occupations, religious cults, social usages, and ideas. The wheelwright of a generation ago gives place to the chauffeur; the Shakers die out while the Christian Scientists increase; and long skirts are no longer the style. Individuals, likewise, continually rise or fall; the man who is poor today is rich tomorrow; the ruler of yesterday is now a music teacher. In our day and country this social mobility is greater than ever before. It is great horizontally because people, habits, institutions, and ideas hop all over the world without changing their social level; Professor Sorokin, for example, remains an inspiring leader wherever he migrates; the radio goes neither up nor down socially when transported from America to China. Vertical mobility is equally common; we all know families of *nouveau riche* and of decayed gentility; the habit of using napkins at the table has spread from the upper classes almost to the lowest; the bicycle is held in much less esteem in America since the automobile appeared, but in Holland and Japan it still seems to be near the top notch of favor in spite of Professor Sorokin's generalization to the contrary.

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Everyone recognizes this mobility, but how many appreciate its significance? The social pyramid, to use Sorokin's favorite illustration, consists of a great series of horizontal layers; at the bottom stands a huge unskilled proletariat; above it a smaller number of skilled workers; then a still smaller group of middle class people; and at the top a few leaders. The differences between the upper and the lower classes are partly the result of environment and partly of heredity. Some people of high ability are born in the lower classes, but never get out of them, perhaps because they live in a very immobile civilization like that of India with its caste system. On the other hand, some who possess low ability are kept in the upper classes by the influence of their families. Nevertheless, on an average, the upper classes show many superior qualities due to inheritance—they are taller, heavier, and have larger heads than the lower classes. They tend to be more beautiful and to have fewer physical blemishes. They likewise have greater strength and endurance, qualities which perhaps rise highest in royal families where the strain of constant public appearances is tremendous. On the other hand, there is no permanent difference in the upper and lower classes on the basis of the complexion or the form of the head. Only in the prevalence of mental diseases does Sorokin find a serious inferiority among the upper classes.

All these things are set forth in such detail and with such countless references that the reader can
[illegible] conclusions for himself, regardless of those
[illegible]uthor. Nevertheless, the reader must walk
[illegible]or example, in discussing the superior size
[illegible] heads Sorokin does not indicate
[illegible]res pertain to actual size, or to size
[illegible] body. Again, he greatly weakens
[illegible] pages of his book by tiresomely
[illegible]story is "trendless." With ex-
[illegible]he demonstrates that fluctua-
[illegible] refers especially to fluctua-
[illegible] change in the form of the
[illegible]usses all sorts of pyramids,
[illegible] political, and the like. In
[illegible]e times he finds the pyramid very flat, in others very tall and slender. Some countries have comparatively few occupations, a vast number of people being engaged in farming, a few in skilled labor and trade, and a handful in the professions. In such countries the pyramid has a broad base, but is very flat. In others, like the United States, a great variety of occupations is represented and the pyramid is tall. We likewise have a tall economic pyramid, because our middle classes still remain fairly numerous.

Now Sorokin is especially interested in the fact that sometimes tall pyramids like ours become flat. This happened in Russia during the Revolution, when the rich lost their property and all classes were reduced almost to a dead level. But such a condition cannot last, for certain elements of the population quickly acquire greater means than their fellows, and the pyramid grows taller.

* * *

It needs no demonstration to prove that fluctuations of this kind are the rule in almost every phase of human existence. Nevertheless, it is valuable to have the facts set down so fully and authoritatively as is done by Professor Sorokin. That, however, does not warrant the conclusion that all history is "trendless;" in fact the opposite is easily demonstrable. If there were no trend whatever, the revolutions of our day would reduce *everyone* to an economic, political, occupational, and social condition like that of the average man in the worst periods of early neolithic times when fire, clothing, and artificial shelter were unknown, when no tools except unshaped sticks and stones were in use, and when there were no such things as government, social classes, or diversity of occupations. No revolution during the Christian era has ever reduced the average person of any country to any such condition, or ever to the corresponding condition in paleolithic or neolithic times, or in the bronze age; nor has the level of any machine-using country ever fallen to that of the lowest eras in the early ages of the use of iron. Moreover, since the introduction of machinery, it is very doubtful whether the most comfortable parts of the population in machine-using parts of the world have ever been reduced to any such economic level as prevailed among average people before the introduction of machinery, and it is not likely that this will ever happen. Similar reasoning shows that in every phase of human life there is a definite trend, so that Sorokin's reiteration of "trendless cycles," a "trendless history," and the "trendlessness" of human existence is not only tiresome but "fantastic," to use a word which he likes to apply to people who do not agree with him.

* * *

In spite of many debatable points like this, Sorokin is intensely interesting and stimulating, as appears in the novel and illuminating idea which he sets forth in his chapter on social testing. In order that people may remain in the upper social classes if born there, or climb thither if born elsewhere, they must pass three primary tests, or else display such rare ability that people overlook their defects in one or another of these tests. One test is the family; the man who wants high position is vastly more likely to get it if he belongs to a good family than to a poor one. Another is the school; uneducated people sometimes attain high position, but in general, high education and high position go together. A third is the church; for a position as a religious leader has always been a powerful factor in raising people's social status. Later in life such matters as economic and political ability play a large part, but we are now talking about the early stages of a career.

The interesting point made by Sorokin is that our present social difficulties are greatly augmented because the testing and sifting of aspirants for membership in the upper classes which formerly came through the family, the school, and the church, has been greatly weakened. People of poor family, for example, can easily get into our upper classes. This may be a good thing, but it distinctly lowers the cultural tone. Uneducated people still have difficulty in attaining high position, but almost everyone can get an education. Education, however, implies little or nothing except intellectual ability. Both culture and morals have almost ceased to be selective factors in admitting people to our educated classes, whereas formerly they played a dominant part. In similar fashion a religious background is not now deemed essential as a criterion for inclusion in the upper classes. All this means that our leaders are not subjected to anything like such stringent selection for high moral and cultural qualities as in the old days. Social mobility is thus increased, but the stability of society is diminished.

Another of Sorokin's thought-provoking discussions concerns the length of life and future prospects of communities where social mobility is low compared with those where it is high. Suppose that mobility is low and it is difficult for strong characters to rise from the lower to the upper classes, while weak characters are kept in the upper classes. The lower classes will grow stronger and less submissive, and the upper classes will grow weaker and may decline in numbers as appears from a great many investigations. Such conditions create what Sorokin calls a vacuum at the top—which can be filled only by an upward movement from below. One of Sorokin's most important theses is that such movements are the main cause of revolutions. Can this be reconciled with the fact that in India, for example, where social mobility is at a minimum, social revolutions are almost unknown? Sorokin attempts this by a glorification of the eugenic system of the "stern" Brahmins, who appear to be the group of human beings whom he most admires.

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Where social mobility is extremely high, as among us, it seems to Sorokin that civilization is bound to be short-lived. Not only do we weaken the lower classes by taking out the able young people, but we sterilize these young people by putting them in the upper classes. At the same time our highly mobile system causes the same person to live in many different places, engage in various occupations, change his associates time and again. All this breaks up the home, destroys community life; deadens the sense of loyalty to one's birthplace, city, and country. It likewise makes people lonely, for even though they become *acquainted* with far more people than did their ancestors, they do not have that intimate association with life-long friends which is one of the finest and most stabilizing of influences. Such conditions and many others lead to nervous restlessness, an eager search for pleasure, suicide, vice, and a host of other evils. They also provide such a wealth of experiences and such a host of new and opposed viewpoints that people distrust everything. That is why religion has been weakened and moral standards have declined. The final result is swift decay. Professor Sorokin's thesis seems to indicate that social immobility and mobility both lead to revolutions, the difference being that immobility keeps a culture firmly established for a long time and then leads to a sudden great revolution as in Russia, while mobility leads to rapid progress and then to rapid decay without any great paroxysm, as in Rome.

* * *

It is not easy to evaluate Professor Sorokin's book. His ideas are certainly of great importance, and demand most careful study. The most outstanding feature of the book is the way in which it raises far-reaching problems as in the following quotation:

> Except during the period of decay, the upper classes are richer [than the lower], with strong, ambitious, able, and adventurous characters; with hard, severe, and non-sentimental natures; with insincere and cynical men. In the period of decay this difference disappears. The upper classes become soft, sincere, humanitarian, timid, and cowardly. Such aristocracy is easily put down and superseded by the newcomers of the usual type. . . . Perhaps it is very pitiful that the real situation is such, and yet it is such in spite of the virtuous theories of the humanitarians. . . . From this standpoint, the future of the present money aristocracy and intellectual and political aristocracy is likely not to be very bright. If [although] they are sufficiently sly, they are quite humanitarian and soft, and are permeated with the spirit of the injustice of their privileges and fortunes. Is it strange, therefore, that in Russia and Italy they have already been put down?

Napoleon, Alexander, Julius Caesar, and Machiavelli doubtless exemplify Sorokin's definition of the type that makes a strong upper class. But how about Confucius, Plato, Jesus, Galileo, Darwin, Livingstone, and Lincoln? Our Russian friend has thrown down many bones upon which there is much good picking.

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Thirty-nine autographed letters written by Col. W. Dansey to his mother while on service in America between 1775 and 1783 were purchased at auction in London recently by Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach of Philadelphia for £850 ($4,250). The lot included a flag of green silk with seven red and six white stripes, in a corner of which were the colors of the Delaware Militia. The flag was taken a few days before the Battle of Brandywine.

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# The Ways of Man to Man

THE BRIDGE OF SAN LUIS REY. By THORNTON WILDER. New York: Albert & Charles Boni. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by LEE WILSON DODD

A NEW talent, and a very distinguished one, has appeared in American letters. It grows clear with his second book, "The Bridge of San Luis Rey," that Mr. Thornton Wilder is not just another literate and sophisticated young man. "The Cabala," his first book, had distinction, passages of genuine insight and beauty; yet there was about it an air of the tentative, the experimental. One felt that Mr. Wilder had wings, that they would prove to be good wings—and even enchanted wings; but one felt, also, that he was merely trying them out a little before they were fully fledged. There was a general atmosphere of flutter eddying round the whole charming performance.

No fluttering now, however! In "The Bridge of San Luis Rey," Mr. Wilder knows precisely what he is doing and why; and, better still, just how to do it. This is lavish, yet restrained, praise for a tale which I am grievously tempted to call a masterpiece. I would do so, and be done with it, if I had not heard so many current books called masterpieces—and subsequently read them. Or perhaps I merely lack the exuberance of Mr. Woollcott, who, on occasion, has been known to fling his hat in air and set all the bells in the steeples ringing. In any event, "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" is not a book to read once and then throw on the pile for the Salvation Army; by lovers of "the things that are more excellent" it will be kept on the shelves and remembered and, doubtless, more than once returned to.

It tells of "the finest bridge in all Peru," which, on July the twentieth, 1714, "broke and precipitated five travelers into the gulf below." It tells, also, of Brother Juniper who "happened to be in Peru converting the Indians and happened to witness the accident."

Anyone else would have said to himself with secret joy: "Within ten minutes myself . . . !" But it was another thought that visited Brother Juniper: "Why did this happen to *those* five?" If there were any plan in the universe at all, if there were any pattern in a human life, surely it could be discovered mysteriously latent in those lives so suddenly cut off. Either we live by accident and die by accident, or we live by plan and die by plan. And on that instant Brother Juniper made the resolve to inquire into the secret lives of those five persons, that moment falling through the air, and to surprise the reason of their taking off.

Now Brother Juniper's exhaustive researches into the lives of the five victims, researches intended to vindicate the ways of God to man, came to no happy issue for Brother Juniper. His enormous memorial of the accident was frowned on by the Inquisition, was publicly burned, and later Brother Juniper himself, "leaning upon a flame," smiled and died. A secret copy of the memorial was preserved, however, "cataloguing thousands of little facts and anecdotes and testimonies, and concluding with a dignified passage describing why God had settled upon that person and upon that day for His demonstration of wisdom. Yet for all his diligence Brother Juniper never knew the central passion of Doña María's life; nor of Uncle Pio's, not even of Esteban's. "And I," continues Mr. Wilder, "who claim to know so much more, isn't it possible that even I have missed the very spring within the spring?"

Some say that we shall never know and that to the gods we are like the flies that the boys kill on a summer day, and some say, on the contrary, that the very sparrows do not lose a feather that has not been brushed away by the finger of God.

Follow, the stories of the five victims of the accident, with their subtly interwoven fates. And when all—in a limpid style, exquisitely compounded of irony and sympathy—is revealed, we hear for a moment of those who had loved the departed and who remain—yet not wholly as they were:—the Abbess, Doña Clara, and that broken, though once radiant and triumphant woman of the gutter, the theatre, and the Viceroy's alcove, Camila Perichole. "Perhaps an Intention" this final chapter is named, and it ends with Doña Clara, softened, yet somehow strengthened, too, and with Madre María, the Abbess, her dearest life-plan frustrate, but who is communing thus, with her heart:

Even now . . . almost no one remembers Est Pepita, but myself. Camila alone remembers I Pio and her son; this woman, her mother. But soon we shall die and all memory of those five will have left the earth, and we ourselves shall be loved for a while and forgotten. But the love will have been enough. . . . Even memory is not necessary for love. There is a land of the living and a land of the dead and the bridge is love, the only survival, the only meaning.

As for the persons so dealt with, you will not easily find a more memorable group; and I particularly commend to you the Marquesa, Pepita, the Abbess, Uncle Pio, and Esteban.

This book is a poem; if you will, a romantic poem—for its true matter is human love, of which Mr. Wilder quietly says: "Many who have spent a lifetime in it can tell us less of love than the child that lost a dog yesterday." But Mr. Wilder is not of the many. It would seem that he understands.

# Something About Adam

ADAM AND EVE. By JOHN ERSKINE. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

SOME years ago I had occasion to remark in a review of two books by Professor Erskine that he was ill at ease in his Academic Zion and apparently anxious to get off the reservation. I have now had the experience valuable to all prophets of being completely astonished by the fulfilment of my own prophecy. Professor Erskine has certainly got off the reservation. Whatever it was the Professor desired to escape from, he has left centuries behind him and continents away. The note which was absent in his essays sounds no more. And the note which was absent in much of his poetry is ringing if anything too clearly. In short, "Adam and Eve" is a quite delightful human book, which deals more deeply with joy and trouble than is quite proper for a professional instructor of youth.

*ADAM AND EVE IN PARADISE*
*From a drawing by Eric Gill*

Three times ought to be too much. But this is a good book, though I hate to say it. No one likes to admit that some one else is elegantly sophisticated. But I fear it must be done. There are a lot of wise remarks in this work which are not wise cracks. There is a great deal of subtle description of spiritual machinery. There is a great deal of pathos, of poetry, and of that decency which is grace—There! I've done it.

In this work, Lilith, the woman who was created consciously experienced, and consciously in harmony with nature, and Eve, the woman who was created with a set of conventions and a high but uncritical sense of her importance as the director of human destiny, do battle for the soul of Adam who on the whole leaves one quite as cold as the scriptural hero. Profoundly impressed by his own intellectual power, he yields to nature in Eve which could not hold him in Lilith, and he remains to the end that dull, slovenly, and inconsistent creature Mr. Erskine, without disliking him, intended him to be. But why did either of the Ladies bother about him? I suppose the answer must be that like many another object *de virtu* not intrinsically valuable, he was unique. And it is fair to say that the intelligent Lilith regained her freedom with only the shadow of a sigh.

But the legend is the least part of it. For the true glory of the book is a random but continual description and definition of existence from many points of view. It makes much the impression that a volume of eighteenth century memoirs makes on the reader who suddenly sees into the depths of his own darkness, as some human infractuosity is almost accidentally laid bare by a forgotten wit. This almost accidental quality is what makes the book.

Mr. Erskine has been called shallow and specious. But I should like to send a barrel of the whiskey he drinks to some of our other generals. For example:

"Some people learn about life by sampling a little of it, and then thinking it over and discussing it. If that's your way, be kind to your friends while you're acquiring wisdom."

"Our destiny isn't necessarily the same thing as the use we are put to."

"Everything begins from loneliness."

These utterances will suggest to people of sympathy what may be found on almost every page. I for one am pleased with what I found.

Mr. Erskine's views on men and women may not be too clear. Like the rest of mankind he may have found plucking the heart out of his mystery a task about which it was easy to be ironic, and hard to be tender. But he has succeeded at the hard task as well as at the easy one. There is something charming in a writer who manages to look at the piece of work that is man with an intelligence and humor that lays no claim to omniscience.

# Character and Destiny

DAYBREAK. By ARTHUR SCHNITZLER. Translated from the German by William A. Drake. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1927. $1.50.

Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES

THE literary form half way between the novel and the short story, called for lack of a better term the novelette, has led in general a curiously unsuccessful life. Theoretically superior to either of its rivals, possessing the unity and intensity of the short story—meeting Poe's requirement of being able to be read at a single sitting,—possessing also something of the mass and momentum of the novel, and particularly adapted, one would suppose, to the needs of a busy age, it has nevertheless failed to become widely popular with either authors or public. The average writer of fiction seems unable to restrain his loquacity within less than three hundred pages, while the public takes its short stories in the magazines and when it buys a book wants to be sure that it has received a due number of words for its money. The worship of mere size is potent here as elsewhere.

Yet there have been a few writers who have cherished the novelette according to its deserts—a James Lane Allen, an Anatole France, a Turgeniev, a Henry James, an Eden Phillpotts, and others whom one does not recall at the moment. Of all who have tarried in this realm, however, Arthur Schnitzler is easily the king. He manages to create a sense of spaciousness within its narrow bounds, a full-orbed miniature world, while on the other hand he permits no frayed-edged incident to reach out calling for a fuller treatment. If ever that much abused word "perfection" be allowable, this is the place for it. The untransgressed limitations of the form cease to be limitations.

"Daybreak," now attractively presented in English dress in the same series in which "Rhapsody," "None But the Brave," and others have appeared, had its genesis thirty-five years ago as an eight-page short story. In the meantime both characters and treatment have matured, enriched with Viennese subtlety, until the chanciest "Good Morning" is freighted with significance. It is a story of gambling—for money, love, and reputation—pervaded by a sense of lowering fate. The novice might suppose for the first few pages that he was reading an artfully constructed denunciation of this vice—the gambler's experiences running so true to form—but soon he would discover that in Schnitzler's world chance rules more than the gaming-table. Character and destiny are inextricably interwoven in the tale. From the opening words "Lieutenant! . . . Lieutenant! . . [illegible]" the

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more sympathetically drawn than is Schnitzler's wont, is in difficulties; each of the persons whom he meets comes in—like strangers in real life—as an enigma to be solved, an enigma which in each case contains a menace and a promise. One by one these riddles—Bogner, Consul Schnabel, Uncle Robert, Leopaldine, and the rest—are all answered, but when the last riddle is read the lieutenant is not there to hear it. His failure to solve the enigma of love has cost him his life. The story runs swiftly through two days and nights, and its feverish events are ironically framed in the coolness of impassive dawns. Thus Schnitzler, with the coolness and impassivity of nature, looks upon the lives he has created, from the far vantage-point of his station above good and evil.

# A Lovely Book

THE OLD BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE. By Sir F. D. Mackinson. New York: The Oxford University Press. 1927.

Reviewed by A. Edward Newton

THIS is a lovely book. Charles Lamb in any *format* is always appealing; and how pleased and amazed and amused he would be to think of the great Oxford University Press making into a beautiful and substantial volume his little paper on The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple, where, as he says, he was born and passed the first seven years of his life.

The best essays are always autobiographical—the creator of the essay, old Montaigne, taught us that—and Charles Lamb's most delightful papers are those in which he refers to his own experiences: the names of dozens of them spring to our lips. But in essay writing, as Dr. Johnson said of a man writing an epitaph, one is not under oath: the essayist may take a thread of truth and string thereon a pearl—many pearls—of fiction. And commentators are frequently misled thereby. I have been told that Lamb's "Oxford in Vacation" was written not after a visit to Oxford but after a visit to Cambridge. The story fits one place quite as well as another. Lamb made love to several shadowy maidens in his essays that may never have lived at all, and we know—what his contemporaries did not—that he loved and proposed and was declined by Miss Kelly, "she of the divine plain face."

And so we who love the choicest cuts of Lamb have always taken his "Benchers" with a grain of salt. Did they all live in the flesh and did Lamb see them clear or only in his mind's eye? These questions and many another Sir F. D. Mackinson, himself a Master of the Bench, has answered for us and given us little biographies and reproductions of many portraits which make us wish we were a Bencher. I might perhaps be mistaken for a wise man, did I wear a wig and a robe.

* * *

How fully saturated with London Charles Lamb is and it with him! Only a few weeks since, one moonlight night I spent an hour wandering in the Temple thinking of the realities and the shadows which once had habitation there, and of the Shakespeare story of the white rose and the red, and of Tom Pinch and his sister and John Westlock. And then I come home and find a letter from the editor of *The Saturday Review* asking me to write a few lines about a beautiful book he is sending me: I turn its pages: once again I am in the Temple. Can the fountain which Charles Lamb "made to rise and fall" many times be the one in which I threw a penny not long ago? Hardly,—but one fountain is as good as another if one be not thirsty and it suggests pleasant memories.

How felicitous is Lamb in a phrase!

Example: "Lawyers I suppose were children once."

How wonderful his selection of the right word!

Example: "What a dead thing is a clock with its *embowelments* of lead!"

But Lamb is in danger of being somewhat overdone. Thackeray called him a "saint;" that was silly: let me not say another word, but this—to end where I began: "The Benchers" is a lovely book.

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An amusing instance of the hold which new terms coined by authors can take upon the public is to be found in the latest application of Karel Capek's "robot." An English journal writes several paragraphs on the introduction of the dial telephone system, referring to it consistently as the "robot exchange."

# The Play of the Week

By Oliver M. Sayler

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA, a Tragedy in Five Acts. By Bernard Shaw. Produced by the Theatre Guild at the Guild Theatre, New York, November 21, 1927. New York: Brentano's.

Reviewed from Performance and Published Manuscript

AS American purveyor in ordinary to His Britannic Masquerader, Bernard I, the Theatre Guild has extended its Shavian canon by bringing to late, but not too late, life on our stage at the age of twenty-one his sixteenth *opus*, "The Doctor's Dilemma." The Granville Barker production of this discursive but absorbing comedy, which its author chooses to label a tragedy, left such confusion in its wake a decade ago that the Guild's revival, shrewd and subtle with the expertness of repertory acquaintance with other Shaw plays on the part of its acting company, amounts to its effective première in New York. Though clearly not in the first rank alongside "Man and Superman," "Heartbreak House," "Caesar and Cleopatra," and "Saint Joan," this animated debate on the foibles of physicians emerges on the Guild's stage from the uncertain limbo of printed drama and securely takes its place high in the second plane of Shaw's plays, incidentally adducing further evidence in proof that a Shaw play well played plays better than it reads.

It is futile, of course, to deny that sacrifice is involved in the loss behind the footlights of those sagely satiric stage directions which are almost as integral a part of a Shaw play published as his hortatory lecture-preface. Intelligent and sensitive actors will tell you, however, that these stage directions are just what they pretend to be—not verbal embroidery and gymnastics to titillate the reader's mind (a mere subsidiary by-product), but cogent and peppery stimuli to the imaginations of producer, designer, and player. They are of a piece with the playwright's own comments and suggestions when he is able himself to conduct rehearsals. They are his effort to insure adequate interpretation of his work in lands he cannot visit and in days beyond his own. If they serve their purpose, therefore, they assume increased import, while losing their original values, by their transmutation into the oral and visual media of the theatre.

* * *

The test of any Shaw production, then, would seem to be the degree of subtlety, imagination, and thoroughness with which these stage directions are transmuted. By such a test, the Guild production of "The Doctor's Dilemma" ranks high in a record already brilliant. The atmosphere and personality of the four stage pictures are conveyed unobtrusively with conviction of the professional uses to which they are put. The characters are sharply and humanly differentiated in both of their dual functions as types and as individuals: Ridgeon, the pushing and egotistic pioneer; Schutmacher, the bland, suave, and self-contained Jew; Sir Patrick, the outwardly crusty but inwardly buoyant rusk of yesterday's baking; Walpole, the pessimistic and pugnacious jockey who rides the hobby of the knife; B. B., the optimist whose mount is vaccines; Blenkinsop, the whipped but uncomplaining dog of general practice; Jennifer, the eternal feminine, cousin to Ann Whitefield in "Man and Superman;" Dubedat, the artist without a moral or a lung; and Emmy, the czarina of the doctor's waiting room. Theories embodied as characters, but so deftly, with such human detail, that when they clash you have no mere debate but the give-and-take, the fast-and-loose, of life.

* * *

To achieve this living and vibrant verisimilitude, the Guild's acting company is eminently equipped by having worked together not only in other plays but in several previous productions of Shaw. Nine members of a cast of fourteen and all but two interpreters of important rôles are Guild-graduate Shavians, while Baliol Holloway, imported from London, is a post-graduate in Shaw at home. Only the actor and his familiars can fully appreciate the subtle spiritual values that accrue from this playing together in like plays; but the public at large, though it may not understand the reason, is quick to sense common attunement within a playing group and its sympathetic penetration into even the subconscious motives of a familiar author, as the Moscow Art Theatre proved with the plays of Chekov. In directing "The Doctor's Dilemma," Dudley Digges built his *mise-en-scène* round the indubitable genius of Alfred Lunt, here revealed in a wholly new facet, but he wisely permitted individual creative power a wide range, trusting to its instinctive sense of bearings.

"The Doctor's Dilemma" wears well. What play or story about human ills and their treatment doesn't, especially if it be satiric? Probably the Chinese physician, paid only while he keeps his patient well, is no such literary temptation. But "Le Malade Imaginaire" is for all time. Recognizing the absence of "occasion" in the play, the Guild has sensibly set and costumed it as of today.

Two aspects of the play bear scrutiny, particularly since they come to full focus only on the stage. One is the lyric note, so sternly repressed in the plays of Shaw and yet so dominant a component of his character, as those who know him are aware. This vein of pity, of human compassion, expressed in lines of poetic fervor, provides Alfred Lunt in Dubedat's death scene with one of the most thrillingly beautiful moments of his acting career. What exaltation could Shaw have brought into the theatre if he had not been so confirmed a crusader!

The other annotation, more obvious after seeing a performance than on reading, is the lack of an author's mouthpiece. Shaw, like the medieval painters, is fond of limning his own portrait, or rather his mind and tongue, in a corner of the canvas. In "The Doctor's Dilemma," however, he has kept himself so aloof, except for a flash of self-raillery, that it is difficult even to be sure where the preponderance of his sympathies lies. With Ridgeon, I imagine, intellectually; though with poor Blenkinsop emotionally. In other words, if Shaw had a headache, he'd call the old family doctor; if he were in mortal danger—and sure his wife wouldn't tempt—he'd summon the great specialist.

Ironically enough, for all its vindictive and merciless assault on vaccination, "The Doctor's Dilemma," more patently than most of his other plays, reveals Bernard Shaw as the greatest living prophylactic agent for the salutary inoculation of the body politic and social. Like vaccines, a little of Shaw goes a long way. Like vaccines, Shaw adduces paradox, if not error, to correct error. But it is the greater error he would cure. And like vaccine, for over three decades, he has been stimulating the phagocytes (or whatever they are called in December, 1927) of human society to listen to him, right or wrong, combat him, and think their own way through to mental and moral health and vigor.

(*Mr. Sayler will review next week "The Plough and the Stars," by Sean O'Casey.*)

# The Spider

By David McCord

NOW with a clean thread
Of a single span,
Softly he has spread
His silken fan

That shrub and thorn enclose
By the dead well,
Sweet where the sunning rose
Binds in a spell

The bee, the butterfly,
All foolish wings
That open at the sigh
Of lineal springs.

And there, against the day's
Delicious draft,
He carries in old ways
His cunning craft:

Dropping along the cool
Invisible track,
A spider with a spool
Upon his back.

A lord within the cone
Of his domain,
He reckons from his throne
The shriveled slain:

A bottle fly, the moth
Who tried to pass
The filter of his cloth
And found it glass.

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# Mr. Moon's Notebook

THANKSGIVING DAY: *Hating One's Friends.*

TO have achieved, however undeservedly, a reputation for mild affability, seems at times like a stigma. I am as observant as the next man. It interests me to peer into faces and to hear ragged ideas emerge from mouths. The odd physical shapes of people often fill me with rich appreciation. My philosophy is: let the individual flourish. I am, therefore, by the way, more nearly an anarch than a savior of society. People do the most peculiar things. To be able to observe people placidly as variegated natural phenomena is to live, as I conceive it, in a state of grace. At least, it is the blander manner. It is certainly the least tedious; and my inertia is excessive. Yet I greatly fear it is all mere pusillanimity.

My private thoughts are often and often quite the reverse of benign. Someone's casual remark about something will itch in my memory for days; someone's negligible opinion concerning something else savagely fester. I find myself morbidly sensitive to people's manners, to their personal appearances, to their idiosyncrasies. My visage hypocritically beams while I harbor lurid dreams of mayhem and murder. As a poetess of the day has pithily put it, "For what I think I'd be arrested." I smile and smile and am a villain. And so, upon this day of exaltation of the turkey you are going to get some cranberry sauce. I can be thankful, at least—and I suppose you wish me to be thankful for something—that most of my friends suppose me quite other than I am. But here we rend the veil, tear down the curtain, and positively stamp upon the portieres.

I have a few friends. Naturally, they are mostly literary. Frequently I think of them "all in a genial glow"—for a short period. But in the arts one's ego becomes quite as bloated (really!) as in other occupations. It is a mistake to believe, for instance, that literary people are the great-hearted, vastly tolerant, expansive-souled, deeply sympathetic, to-a-fault-generous, high, wide and handsomely spiritual folk you may have imagined them. Or perhaps you didn't. Well, you were right. Neither, I conjecture, though I have hardly ever known a banker (at least to borrow from), are bankers. And I don't suppose firemen are very different; or bakers; or plumbers. I even have my doubts concerning policemen.

I say I have a few friends. But the slate, I suppose, must be sponged clean. For my true inner nature is now going to consider some of them.

* * *

Among literary people there are critics. I know some critics. Take the case of my friend Ralph Edgewood. He is a critic. And how often he annoys me! Ralph is scathing; therefore, they call him a good critic. But Ralph is also always "discovering" people. I have laid a like flattering unction to my soul at times. Perhaps that is why he irritates me so. I usually know the work of the people of whom he talks. A year or so ago Edgewood "discovered" Olivia Nash. I listened to nothing but the praises of Olivia Nash every time I met Ralph. It was, "At last we have a novelist!" or "Have you met her? A most astounding person." or "Heavens! Of course she doesn't live in the city. She cares nothing for all this drivel around us. She lives in the mountains. She belongs to literature." or "She walks in beauty like the night—" (No, but he would have said that, I am convinced, if he hadn't been beaten to it.) Well, Olivia Nash could write. Most of Ralph's enthusiasms can really write. But in less than three months he was talking of nothing but Carfroy Howard. My first remark, rather silly, I admit, was that nobody could really have a name like "Carfroy." Ralph glared at me through his glasses. "Oh, bosh! Nonsense! Here at last we have a poet. Naturally, he is not likely to be recognized—but Howard *is* a *poet*. He has put the kibosh on all this claptrap. Let me read you—!" He read me a bit of the kibosh.

But Howard could write also. It wasn't that. It was that in all the spacious firmament on high there was no star even glinting weakly except the star of Carfroy—for three more months. Then I happened to say something about Carfroy to Edgewood. "Oh, yes," Ralph mumbled absently. "He's gaga. I expected his talent to flicker. But it's completely gone out. Anyway, it's hardly worth one's while to bother with most poetry, old or new. The *book* is, of course, Blaxton Sturm's bitter analysis of western civilization, 'Delirium.' Read it? I thought not. That's a book not only for this century but for all time!"

"By the way," I offered, in passing, "I think that this last novel of Olivia Nash's is rather the best thing she's yet done."

"Olivia Nash?" Ralph frowned nearsightedly at me. "Who? *What?* Good Lord, you don't mean to say you *still* read Olivia Nash! That glow-worm only glimmered for a day."

Only one more example. A year had passed when after having at last got around to reading "Delirium" I thought I would like to discuss it with Ralph one evening. "My dear boy," he interrupted me, "for God's sake don't bring up *Sturm!* Really!" There was then what is known as a pregnant silence. Finally Ralph added weightily, "The case of Ethel Carricker is certainly an extraordinary one. Ethel Carricker's essays—know them? There at last is—"

Some day maybe I shall strangle my dear friend Edgewood—slowly, slowly. Or break the darned butterfly on a Ferris wheel!

* * *

One knows editors also. In fact I, myself, am an editor. Though sometimes I hardly know myself. Fulton Tweet is supposed to be a good editor. He is always around, talking to authors. He is extremely busy in the office, usually in conference. He bounces to and fro with a crammed brief-case. He dictates a great many letters. Fulton Tweet edits a magazine of large circulation. He lunches a great deal. Perhaps that is all I should say about him, because there is usually very little else to say of an editor. However, I shall go on. Tweet has one trait in common with Edgewood. He is usually rushing out of his inner sanctum with the exclamation, "By George, this is the greatest—!" But, in his case, the manuscript concerning which he is rhetorical invariably turns out to be the latest journeywork of one of the plethoric and popular writers. Tweet is accustomed to talk in big figures to and of these large fry. "Oh, an amazing piece of work!" he will boom at you over the spotless napery of I-Know-a-Good-Little-Place-on-Forty-eighth-Street. Then he will unsparingly outline the plot. So far as I have been able to observe he is most expansive toward seductions and a lot of shooting. He also likes Big Themes. "Oh, a Big Theme!" he will gasp over his lobster. "I tell you, a Big Theme! This is one of the Biggest Themes a modern writer has ever tackled. I tell you, my boy, this story is full of *dynamite*." I am to infer that it explodes just about everything.

Yet, when I occasionally, but far more warily of late years, run through the presentation of this Big Theme when the magazine drifts eventually to my desk, I am surprised to find how conventional is the story's pattern, how floridly usual is the "love interest," how stale in its essentials the bombination of the "action." Large illustrations are smeared all over the leading pages and the text thence pursues a narrow track through acres of advertisements. It is all "dressed up" to astound the eye, and one instalment of it is like worrying an underdone pork chop. Get Tweet on the past and he harps chiefly upon a single chord. "Ah, yes, *then* there were *giants*. Take Dickens! Take Thackeray!" But the trouble is that I have really "taken" them, as well as a few in other eras, and Tweet quite evidently has not, when it comes down to cases. But the few names he knows stood for Reputations in their time. They "got across." They were the Big Figures!

Some day, perhaps—I wonder which Tweet would prefer: arsenic or strychnine. . . .

* * *

One knows what we call creative writers. Barker Glaive is acknowledged to be a creative writer. He has written a novel or two, a book or two of poems, a book or two of essays, a play or two. He is two two. His conversation is mostly, "Oh, yes, I know him very well—poor fellow!" This refers to any eminent literatus you may mention. Then Barker goes on. "You know, when I was writing my 'Scales Fallen' I remember Blank saying to me—it was at a luncheon given for me by old Howells—poor fellow!—I remember Blank saying to me, 'Ah, if I had my life to live over again, Glaive! Hew to the line, my dear man; so many of us have taken the wrong track!' I remember receiving such a shock when I read of the old boy's death several months later. He accomplished so very little, of course, that is,—well, really,—but he was a kindly old soul."

Glaive will always with apparent diffidence show you something he has lately written. If you venture any comment, he will merely smile away at the wall, a smile he strives to make enigmatic. He will take back the fragment from you absently, with some such remark as, "Yes; yes; what a pity it is that any nuance so invariably escapes you, old man." Or—oh something endearing of that kind! Glaive can only work in the small hours of the morning, writing with a quill at an ancient lectern.

An axe would make a good deal of mess. I am sure Glaive would greatlier relish the poignant delicacy of a poigniard. . . .

So,—ah, how one loves one's friends! I shan't go on. I do not wish to become maudlin about them. Some of them are energetic and optimists; some of them are sardonic and pessimists; some of them talk idealistically and wax didactic; some of them talk chiefly of other's sentimentalities and then proceed expansively to display their own; some of them see through every one's motives; and some of them croon of magnificent motives that were never there. Some of them—some of them—some of them—but now I am just spluttering.

And what a poltroon I am! I have not really dared to pillory a single actual friend. The above are merely synthetic dummies; even though parts of them somewhat resemble—. Which leads immediately to the disquieting thought that parts of them rather resemble—me. Thus the dark night of the soul completely descends upon me. Yet even at such a juncture, the voice of the late James Thomson (B.V.) is crooning mockingly in my ear:

> Once in a saintly passion
> I cried with desperate grief,
> "O Lord, my heart is black with guile,
> Of sinners I am chief."
> Then stooped my guardian angel
> And whispered from behind,
> "Vanity, my little man,
> "You're nothing of the kind."

. . . So what satisfaction *is* there!

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

(*To be continued*)

# Finger and His Songbook

FRONTIER BALLADS: Songs from Lawless Lands. By CHARLES J. FINGER. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1927. $3.50.

By CARL SANDBURG
Author of "The American Songbag"

ONCE there was a railroad receiver in Ohio, having high and influential connections with banking and transportation magnates of the Buckeye state. And he was on the way to being a magnate. Then one day while on a strictly business errand down in Arkansas, he came to a valley where he said, "This reminds me of the Berkshires only I like it better—it's cheaper." So he turned his back on Columbus, Cincinnati, Cleveland, spoke the words, "Good by, proud world," put his family of guaranteed black-eyed children on the steam cars, rode to Arkansas, and set up for himself as a cross between a dirt farmer and a country squire.

The name of our hero is Charles J. Finger and he is out now with a statement that he does not choose to run for Governor of Arkansas inasmuch as he would have no platform to run on because he believes nothing is wrong or whatever may be he couldn't do anything about it.

However, instead of a declaration of principles as to where he stands on the issues of the day he offers the American, Mexican, and Australian peoples a songbook which is titled, "Frontier Ballads: Songs from Lawless Lands." The book is a good deal like a long, pleasant, stubborn, bittersweet love letter to the human race at large. He is personal on every page, sets forth a good number of original contributions, and follows a writing style that mixes the blunt manners of the bad man with Addisonian periodic sentences that have the ease of a healthy axman.

The book begins with an introduction, whereupon the author slams home "A Somewhat Discursive Note on Outlaws, Murderers, Pirates, Hard-Cases, Rapscallions, and Similar Radiant Figures." A

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chapter on New Mexican Troubadours follows, and instead of Ten Nights there is then "*A* Night in a Barroom" and "When American is Gringo."

He argues that the ballads of outlaws and hard-cases are not the products of men of emotional instability, are not glorifications of wickedness.

> You do not find ballads about lynchings. Nor about pickpockets. Nor about fraudulent bankrupts. Nor about blackmailers. Nor about cardsharpers. Nor about defaulters. For true valor is not in them. You may have a ballad about Dick Turpin who robbed with a sort of lightness and humor and courtesy, but you find no ballad about the swindler Lemoine. A modern instance comes to my mind in someone's making a song about a daring fellow, who with splendor of courage tried to escape from Governor's Island; but no one has been moved to sing of the humorous mood in which Master Ponzi robbed his victims.

He notes that pirates and outlaws have gone about their business "with something of the swagger and vivid spirit of youth" while there are available "no fine and moving ballads about land sharks, or forgers, or receivers of stolen goods, or absconding cashiers." Then he gives the modern ballad of the attempt at prison-breaking from Governor's Island on July 4, 1923.

At Devil's River, Texas, Finger meets a man walking to California who said he had started from Cincinnati.

> Before that he had lived in Kansas where he knew the James boys; he had seen the Great Eastern steamship when it first arrived in New York; he had participated in all major engagements of the Civil War; he was in Chicago during the great fire, he had been with Barnum and had narrowly missed being with Custer on Little Horn River in Montana, and he was one of the men under General Merritt at Rawlins, Colorado, when the Apaches killed thirty-two of their pursuers.

* * *

Finger enjoys some kinds of liars and comments, "He was a genial tale-teller and it did not do to question him too closely." Among other things this traveler was selling song sheets, one about Jesse James, remarking, "Of course, there are other songs about this here Hero, but not authentic."

Among a number of excellent brief sketches of "disseminators of folk songs," we might award the bun to the Armless Wonder.

> He was a cripple, the Armless Wonder, and used to travel the range country displaying his skill in box-making, shaving himself publicly, wood-chopping, and writing, doing all with his feet. Once in Sonora, Texas, he went into a gambling house and sat in at a game of poker, then suddenly drew a gun, held up the players, and made off with the stakes. The story sounds improbable, but is nevertheless true. I saw him run into the street, jump into his buggy and make off after the robbery.

Finger carries the tale of the Armless Wonder and his songs at the Silver Dollar saloon for several pages. Notes go with songs telling how to approach the mood of singing them. "Quantrell" requires we should "cultivate a mood of haggard indignation." As to "The Coon-Can Game" remember "in attempting to sing it, be careful to be careless."

The partnership of Finger with Paul Honoré, the illustrator, works well. The Honoré wood cuts here are tough, rough, moody, strong, with a capacity for taking punishment, a style pictorially that travels nicely with Finger's writing manner.

On the basis of this book alone Finger will be remembered longer than any Governor of Arkansas and we are pleased that he does not choose to run.

We especially commend this book to those who are trying to stop crime waves. The cause of crime waves is criminals and hard-cases and Finger understands such of them as sing.

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Once one of England's most popular young dramatists, Noel Coward now seems to be the victim of a feud among theatre-goers (says a dispatch to the New York *World*). They made it evident by their hooting reception of his new play, "Sirocco," when it opened in London recently, that they probably will howl against anything he writes in the near future. The chief grievance appears to be that his more reecnt works have insufficient plot for full plays.

The turmoil at "Sirocco" was the worst seen in a London theatre in many years. It followed less raucous manifestations of disapproval at the recent first night of his "Home Chat."

There was loud and ironical laughter and applause during strong episodes between the heroine and her lover. When not directing themselves toward the players, persons in the audience exchanged insults among themselves. One man in evening dress repeatedly yelled, "You swine!" at the gallery. The gallery did not fail to answer him.

# The Princeton Years

WOODROW WILSON: LIFE AND LETTERS. By Ray Stannard Baker. Vol. II. The Princeton Years. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1927.

Reviewed by Henry Noble MacCracken
President, Vassar College

"As compared with the college politician, the real article seems like an amateur," remarked Governor Wilson to his interviewer in 1911. Few men have had his experience in both fields, but no college administrator who has stood on a platform of his own choice before his college constituency would fail to grant an external resemblance, at least, to the great American game. Back of the apparent issues in college administration there lie always other issues, differing only in magnitude, not in kind, from those that determine national elections. Now and then, as in Wilson's case, the real issues rise momentarily to the surface, only to be submerged by the common consent of all parties. "The ship sails faster thus," is the answer given to the idle questioner. Let the college leader address himself to a burning question such as birth control, to starting a dispassionate forum for international politics, let him express an interest in the Soviet point of view, or defend a searching study of the emotions, and almost instantly the fire starts, to be smothered with equal speed by those powers that are highly resolved that, whatever happens, there shall be no deficit.

It was the tragedy of Wilson's Princeton conflict that there was a deficit. He wrote to a trustee in 1907, "We shall really not be free to do what we deem best at Princeton until we are relieved from the dictation of the men who subscribe to the Committee of Fifty Fund and who can withhold our living from us if we displease them." For a moment the curtain is lifted on the actual issue, and then shuts down.

For Wilson's surrender in 1910 was an admission that he could not defeat the deficit. He was fighting for a graduate school of his own making, and its site had come to be the focal point of controversy. It seems strange that Princeton should have let the battle rage over the question whether a hundred men, resident students, were to live on the golf links or a little nearer the library, yet that was the case, as Mr. Baker makes clear. National politics are decided on issues equally trivial, because behind them and around them, stark and dread, are the real issues of which every one is conscious, but which no one would call forth. It was a teapot tempest, but the same force stirring as blows off volcano cones.

An aged man, dying dramatically at the height of the controversy, filled by bequest the budget of Wilson's opponent, and the game was up, for the moment. Wilson was ejected from Princeton, and on issues handed to him by Roosevelt was presented with a Governor's chair over night.

* * *

This, in brief, is the story skilfully told by Wilson's biographer in the second volume of the officially documented narrative of the great president's career. The intensity of the struggle at Princeton from 1902 to 1910, which fills practically the whole book, must amaze the European scholar who reads it. Is this the cloistered academic life? "His election to the presidency fell like a thunderbolt. Not a single professor had had an inkling of it in advance." "No one occupied a neutral position with respect to Woodrow Wilson," said a scientist colleague to the biographer. A scientist, and a partisan? The thing seems a contradiction in terms; and no one not actually in the midst of this American hurlyburly, this fight for life of the higher world of mind against the great principalities and powers, can possibly understand it. And so the stones of Princeton's graduate school were cemented with bitterness, belying the calm of its loveliness today.

The reviewer recalls a conversation of the time with a member of the New York Princeton Club. "Wilson must go, he wants the graduate school on the golf links." Next day this was challenged. The truth was just the opposite, it appeared. It was West who wanted the links. "It makes no difference; Wilson must go."

And the conflict was, after all, a matter of personality. Not that in every outstanding college of this generation there have not been just such struggles. There was nothing peculiar about the Princeton affair, except that it came to light. But there was in Wilson a certain spiritual energy, a blowing as of a strong fan upon the fire, that threatened a conflagration. Wilson will be remembered for many things; not least for this, that there never was his friend or foe that could keep his temper.

Into the forging of this fierce nature there went a Scots ancestry, a Calvinistic faith, a nature sensitive beyond belief to the subtleties of social attitudes, a southern upbringing, and a sense of high mission not surpassed in history. Is it any wonder that where Wilson passed the lid blew off? Add to this an increasing debate between the body and the soul of the protagonist, and what would you? Emotions that burned up the frail organism, and were only pacified by pretended "vacation" (for this was before the days of nutrition and mental hygiene), were the real victors in the strife.

* * *

The "quad" dispute, preceding and paralleling that of the golf links, was less striking and less important, but no less a symbol of the issues making towards expression in the American university. And as in the larger debate, discussion centered about buildings and where they should go. Curious, how when Americans start up a talk on ideas, the conversation soon settles down to something solid, like a stone wall or a concrete foundation. Wilson wanted to put the clubs, Princeton's substitute for "frats," into college quads. This has since been done at several western colleges. In women's colleges, thanks to residence, they never were started. But at no one of the older foundations has any real headway been made in this direction. The *Yale News* brought up the problem a few days ago. But for good or ill, the fraternity is as much a part of the American university as ever the "nation" was in its medieval predecessor, and the genius of the future will build his university upon them. Wilson knew this, but allowed himself to be outgeneraled by politicians on the pretext that he was endangering property rights. Baker quotes an "Ivy" man as classing Wilson with Roosevelt in his rash assaults on property.

Wilson intended no assault on property. He did not desire the abolition of the clubs. He had, however, embarked on a crusade for education. This was the stark reality behind the issues of quads and golf links. Did the alumni of the "1900's" want education at Princeton? They did not; not, at least, at the strenuous pace Wilson had set. "He drives too fast."

* * *

A "comradeship of letters" for teacher and pupil was his ideal, an ideal found at Oxford. A curriculum of organized groups of studies was his reform of the elective system; a plan that was not unlike Gilman's at Johns Hopkins. The quad program was English in its first suggestion. None of his schemes was, in short, original; this is true of nearly every genius. What was his own in his cause was the intensity with which he espoused it; the zeal, the fiery eloquence that poured out over the fields of learning. Wilson's Phi Beta Kappa speech at Yale left his hearers at its close drawing a deep breath as if an electric storm had freshened the air.

Of the details of education he was, as always, impatient. He was the lecturer rather than the teacher. He cared little for the measurements, then beginning, of mental qualities. The whole new content of learning, of physics, physiology, anthropology, sociology, archæology, and the rest, that have given us a new method with a new curriculum, came for the most part after his day, and were not of great interest to him as they came. He suspected science. Even in his own field he was the acute rather than the accurate scholar. Yet he drew to Princeton a famous faculty, and set its heart afire with scholarship.

He was, it seems, primarily, the orator. In an age of phrasemongers, he said his say. He will stand with Demosthenes. He made certain things clear. The instruments he fought to establish, the institutions he pledged allegiance to, may be so modified in time that his work will no longer be recognized as his. But if men think as much in words and out of words as some people say they do, the student's mind will follow the path be blazed for many a long day.

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Complete runs of that short-lived American periodical, *The Seven Arts*, which contained the first appearance of Theodore Dreiser's "Life, Art and America," as well as contributions by Sherwood Anderson, Amy Lowell, etc., are in the catalogue list of George A. Van Nosdall.

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# Sidelights on History

THE GREVILLE DIARY. By PHILIP WHITWELL WILSON. New York: Doubleday Page & Co. 2 vols. 1927. $10.

Reviewed by PAUL BIRDSALL
Harvard University

MEMOIRS constitute important material for formal history and biography. If they are sufficiently intimate, strongly enough seasoned with gossip and scandal, for many they provide a refuge from formal history, particularly at the present day. Yet in popular estimation they suffer from lack of synthesis and arrangement, and while Lytton Strachey has used extensively the journal of Greville for his biography of Queen Victoria, those eight volumes of the journal edited by Reeve are seldom approached by the casual reader, for all the interesting material that they contain.

Mr. Wilson has attempted a selective and arranging process, whereby two volumes contain the high lights of the eight. He has arranged by topics, with the more important excerpts from the diary, relating to them, though scarcely in chronological order, compressed into chapters and knit together by comment and explanation of his own. The whole he has garnished with beautifully reproduced portraits of the social and political figures of the age, and he adds to the inevitable appeal of such an edition by incorporating fragments which in Reeve's edition were suppressed out of deference to Queen Victoria, and which have apparently now aroused indignation in the English court.

The material first suppressed and now revealed deals for the most part in critical comment upon the Queen herself, and where Mr. Wilson's edition complains "that the Queen has been in a restless state, always wanting to go somewhere, and do something," that "she has been with only short intervals in a constant state of locomotion,"—the original edition is silent. Again a silly story of the Queen's shawl, concluded by the unnecessary asperity of Victoria's rebuke to her lady in waiting, "Duchess of Bedford, I have been waiting some time for my shawl," now sees the light of day for the first time.

The censorship thus exercised by Reeve, judicious as it was intended to be, failed to avert the wrath of the Queen, who complained of this "dreadful and really scandalous book," and professed herself to be "*horrified* and *indignant*" at Greville's "indiscretion, indelicacy, ingratitude, towards his friends, and his betrayal of confidence and shameful disloyalty towards his sovereign." Her uncompromising virtue which dominated all ranks of English society in the nineteenth century, from the court downward, could somewhat restrain the freedom of expression contained in the first edition, even though a censorship judicious enough to make Greville palatable to his Queen must have mutilated his journal beyond repair. As to Wilson's restoration of Greville's original expression and unsavory gossip, it is perhaps not inappropriate to recall how Victoria silenced those who offended her sensce of propriety by saying simply, "We are not amused."

The new edition is readable and informative, but it has sacrificed much of the depth and background of the original. It is not merely that a great deal is necessarily omitted in such a work of selection and compression, but that in the combination of many of the fragments there is lack of cohesion, and hence a certain thinness. More, there is sometimes a rather startling inversion of chronological order, as when we read on page 151 of volume I, "Yesterday we heard of the death of Sydney Smith. . . His case had for some time been hopeless," and in the concluding paragraph of the chapter on page 153, "Breakfasted with Rogers, Sydney Smith . . ."!

Hence the impression one derives of the social and political England of the period is kaleidoscopic and elusive, rather than coherent and constructive. An organic entity such as Greville's diary scarcely lends itself readily to "editing" in our modern, and largely surgical, sense. The process exacts a cost.

Yet this is no more than to say that Mr. Wilson's purpose is not primarily historical. The merits of his work consist in its appeal to the general reader. His comment furnishes the background of social and political events, and the links which unite a profusion of personages in a highly colored drama. It is an extremely good work of popularization, and it is in accordance with the tendency which is sound, if too often exaggerated, of interesting the general reader in the materials of history.

## The Bowling Green

# Epilogue for Toulemonde

NATURE plays Dame Macbeth. She drowns the days
In burly slumber, in a booze of sun,
Brimming the hollows with her golden drug
And all the while sets on, in prickling night,
The murderer with moonlight on his blade.
Here where you drowse among these amber thickets
The gouts of blood are sprinkled in the brush
Where wounded summer crept away to die.

Beneath the gorgeous robe, the sweet accost,
Beneath the silk and scarlet of November
She masquerades the traitor in the hostess
And, ladylike, wears her most Persian colors
For bedtime and the boudoir. Women all
Raiment themselves most brightly for the dark
Which is, on information and belief,
Their true dominion. So she plays the rôle,
Behind her ruddy arras clink of steel,
The tread of feet, the uneasy nightmare cry,
And in her double bosom, warm as milk,
She hides the sudden dagger of the frost.

Yet now, of all those stabbed and murdered hours
We have one token, emblem, microcosm—
Months of summer, packed and coiled and crisped
In the chrysanthemum's bitter knot of curls.
Oh curly heads! While I was laughing, loafing,
Loving, cursing, sleeping, praying, drugging
With such poor anodynes as I could find
(The beach of Lido or the beach of Lethe)
They drank the season in: the humming ether
Of tense July, the lubber barroom bees,
The ticking of unanswerable woodland
Lavender and livid with the moon,
An almanac of all the summer's pride.
What schooling theirs, meridian's docile pupils—
Color and wealth from our good Lord the Sun
Gilding early dazzles of the air.
Like young green monks they dipped their pens in or,
Took the text, disputed not the doctrine,
And how shall I construe their curlicues
Script in some gaudy vulgate of their own?
Darkness, rain and blaze, blaze, rain and darkness,
They abode their cycle. So did I.
They kept their own counsel. So will I.
They brought forth their beauty. So must I.
But thinking of those days and what they meant,
Their close and angry savor, I guess well
Just why these autumn blazons are so fair,
Red seal and probate on the summer's will.

There was a green light once on lawn and glade,
The kind of green that dwells on second acts
Of Shakespeare's forest fancies. Far above,
The cloud-capped pinnacles, the gorgeous towers
Swimming, lifting in warm gauzy shine.
Then best he realized how very helpless
He was in the slick world. "Helpless indeed,
I've not read Shakespeare, even." It was queer,
His mind ran much on Shakespeare, whom he knew
By divination mostly: and I felt

How well the two would have got on together.
There was a day, a dull moist hazy day
When walking very lonely on a road
He found an old moss-mottled cross of stone.
It said: O CRUX, AVE SPES UNICA.
He paused and looked and wondered to himself;
Said to himself, I wonder if that's true?
Is that the only hope? Perhaps it's so
Because it is the one that none embraces
Until he's tried all else.
And as he thought
His little secret notions, all the while
Those enamelled cherubs in the garden,
Those tight green buds, round pellets of October,
Absorbed the afternoon and asked no question.

So it is strange, this instinct that we have
To hurry on through Time, push Time behind us
And get on to the Next Thing—which might be
No Time at all, or else a change of pace,
Some relativity more in proportion
To our poor need. I wonder, does it mean
We guess some infinite reintegration?
Yet I'm not keen to have life over with
Until I solve the mere technique of living,
Compose that conflict of necessities
The conscious and unconscious. When to swim,
When merely to be carried by the stream?
(This was Toulemonde in Wordsworth vein.)
For there are some who know, the gifted some—
Have nickels in their pocket for the subway,
Can find a taxi on a rainy night,
Make grass and flowers grow, hire able service,
Rest softly without gluttony of sleep,
Be well yet inconspicuously clad,
Greet their acquaintance and pass shrewdly on
Not netted in arrears of conversation,
Tell all the pretty fibs of daily rote,
Can worship yet be proud. These have the art,
These, adequately mad, without surrender
To rhetoric and greed. They love the world,
Their lives are harmony.

And so I watch the year play Dame Macbeth
And I the pallid partner of her plan:
Summer I loved, my kingdom and my king
Stabbed in his sleep and crept away to die.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

# The Platonic Vision

FLOWERS AND ELEPHANTS. By CONSTANCE SITWELL. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1927. $1.75.

THE reviewer can add nothing to E. M. Forster's Introduction to this excellent and charming book. He quotes, rather than criticizes, because he would have wished to say what Mr. Forster says with more perspicacity and authority than another could command. Outwardly, "Flowers and Elephants" is only an exquisite travel narrative, written ostensibly by a girl whose sensitiveness to flowers and to the strange beauties of the hills, the jungles, native states, priests, wild elephants, is expressed in still more sensitive English. But—

> It is not at all the book it seems to be. Misled by its unpretentiousness, the careless reader will mistake it for the travel impressions of a young lady who went to stop with her brother in India, where she had one or two proposals of marriage which she declined. Our heroine visits Bombay and the Taj, she includes Ceylon, she attends Brigade Sports and an elephant drive, she peeps at maharajahs and bazaars and idles in clubs, she sympathetically repels the attention of elderly men. She is charming. How well one knows it all! But the book is not like that. An indwelling spirit informs it, and the color of a sea voyage, the vivid touches of oriental life, the clever snatches of talk, are bound together and heightened by that contest between perfection and imperfection which runs through all the Platonic vision. Life is at one moment so exquisite and near, at the next worthless and remote. Despondency and happiness succeed each other as swiftly as the motions of a parrot's wing, and happiness is more probable in solitude. So the girl strives to be alone, not—as some women—in order that she may enhance her attractiveness, but in order that she may achieve her vision. At the end, when she is home again, and the marvels and disquiets of her Indian tour are composing themselves, she finds hope and peace: "I knew there was permanence: I felt reality. I shall find them, I said to myself, the flowers and jungles and innocent huge beasts. I shall find them where the pattern of these things eternally dwells!"

❧ ❧ ❧

The miniature, delicate yet strong, vivid in realism yet designed to capture beauty not mere fact, is one of the achievements of contemporary British literature. David Garnett, Ronald Firbanks, Ronald Fraser are practitioners whose names come to mind; and in this country Thornton Wilder and Robert Nathan are by no means imitators. Mrs. Sitwell is different. She has the brilliance of the miniaturist, but her ivory page is illumined from within by a naïve mysticism not less effective because it is felt rather than thought. She depends less upon fantasy, more upon her mind's reflection of a scene, which in her narrative is still a scene but far more significant than the mere reality for another. In this way do travel books become literature.

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# Books of Special Interest

## Empress Dowager

MOTHER DEAR; THE EMPRESS MARIE OF RUSSIA AND HER TIMES. By V. POLIAKOFF (Augur). New York: D. Appleton & Company. $3.50.

Reviewed by A. M. NIKOLAIEFF

BIOGRAPHIES of persons who are still living do not fall as a rule into the scope of literary works which may be considered as reflecting the full and true characteristics of their subjects. The author of such a biography, even should he succeed in freeing himself from the bias existing in every contemporary observer, is strongly handicapped by the lack of historical perspective. There are, however, exceptions to that general rule. The period of the Imperial régime in Russia, brought to an end by the Revolution, may be regarded as one of them. Though fresh in the memory of the older generation, it has, since the great cataclysm and fundamental change in Russia's life, become history, and the personages who had taken active part in that period belong to the past.

This is one reason why the appearance of a book devoted to Marie Feodorovna, Empress Dowager of Russia, does not seem premature. Another reason lies in the fact that all who, whether "at the Court or outside of it," knew Dagmar, the little Danish Princess, who came to be a mighty Empress and whose life "spans three political generations," were unanimous in their opinion as to her characteristics and the rôle she had played in Russia. This great popularity she won by the charm of her personality, her unfailing tact, womanly virtues, and enlightened activities.

The contrasts and ups and downs of Empress Marie's highly dramatic fate present perhaps a unique example. Her childhood and early life, though she was one of the children of Prince Christian and Princess Louise (who later became King and Queen of Denmark), passed under very modest conditions. Her parents were obliged "to scrape to make their budget balance somehow," and the children's great pleasure was to stroll along the streets of Copenhagen and "have a good look in at the windows of the smart shops which were too expensive for them." That simple atmosphere changed for her into a life of splendor and glory, when at the age of nineteen, a graceful girl with "starry eyes," she married the Heir Apparent of Russia and later (in 1881) became the Empress-consort of Alexander III. An excellent idea of the pomp, glitter, and magnificence which surrounded her may be had from such descriptions in the book as the ceremony of her wedding day in St. Petersburg and of the Coronation in the Kremlin. But the glory of that life was obscured by an ever existent shadow of tragedy. The "dreadful man-hunt" by the Nihilists against Alexander II which resulted in his assassination, the attempts on the life of her husband, Alexander III (in one of which Lenin's brother took part), the railway catastrophe at Borki in which the Imperial family was saved from inevitable death by the gigantic strength of the Emperor who for a few moments supported the weight of the falling roof of the car on his broad back, the revolutionary movement of 1905, and the fall of the Imperial régime,—followed by Bolshevism—such were the circumstances under which passed more than fifty years of her life in Russia.

Exposed, as she was, owing to her high rank, to the danger of political assassination, Empress Marie did not take personal part in politics. Her interest was concentrated on family affairs and on social work which she took upon herself at the head of great educational and charitable organizations in Russia. Yet there are proofs showing how great and beneficial was the influence exercised by her over her husband. No less important was her rôle in the reign of her son, Nicholas II, during which her position as the first lady at Court remained unimpaired and her influence in court etiquette as well as her social leadership were predominant. She was regarded as the "repository of a tradition," but never did she pursue personal aggrandizement. Later, when a "moral cleavage" occurred between her and her son she preferred "voluntary retirement" to an open break. In this "retirement" she lived all through the Great War, but continued, to the fullest extent, her activities in relieving distress and supporting the Red Cross and other organizations. When, following the Revolution, matters in Russia were going from bad to worse, and at her place in the Crimea she was kept for a time under severe guard by Bolshevist sailors who committed countless atrocities—the situation was taken by her "with more than good humor" and she carried herself with true Imperial dignity. In 1919, when Civil war was raging in Russia, a Dreadnought specially sent by King George took away the Dowager Empress—his aunt. From England she came back to Copenhagen. "The course of life has been run and the circle is closed."

It is not only Empress Marie's portrait and life-story, in the narrow sense of these words, that form the contents of the book. We also find in it an interesting description of her times, excellent pen sketches of the last autocrats of Russia, and enlightening glimpses into history. The conflict between the two Empresses—mother and wife of Nicholas II, is also taken up. Occasionally the reader comes across details which are not generally known, and tend to show that the author must have had access to private documents. This greatly helped him to perform successfully his task—to place before the present generation a vivid picture of a great lady who may serve as a high example of those who symbolize noble and "sweet womanhood."

## The English Language

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WRITINGS ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE FROM THE BEGINNING OF PRINTING TO THE END OF 1922. By ARTHUR G. KENNEDY. Cambridge and New Haven: Harvard University Press. Yale University Press. 1927.

Reviewed by GEORGE PHILIP KRAPP
Columbia University

IN the long future, many a student of English will have occasion to think gratefully of Professor Kennedy as he draws upon the rich collections of this book. Fourteen years of labor have gone to the making of the book and just short of fourteen thousand separate title entries are made and discussed in it. Some of these entries are cross-references under different headings, but not many. On the other hand, the fourteen thousand entries by no means indicate the number of works examined and citations made. For a single entry may carry under the main title ten or a dozen references to reviews in scattered places. Professor Kennedy explains that he has checked more than fifteen thousand volumes of serial publications for articles on English—a task in itself to make one groan. But it is just this kind of exhaustiveness that makes the book specially valuable to the student of the English language.

Most persons who are at all deeply interested in English no doubt have kept some sort of bibliography, but the number of those who have had the courage and patience to put down all the titles they thought they might at some time need must be very small. But here they are, all logically arranged according to a simple system of classification, and all fully indexed for the convenience of those who do not want to take the trouble to understand the classification. That the bibliography is absolutely complete the compiler does not maintain, nor will any reasonable person expect that it should be so. Certain large general exclusions were intentionally made in the first plan of the book, for example, of writings on English versification, of rhetorics, elementary grammars, dictionaries, and other text books for the lower grades of schools made after 1800. The inclusion of all this material would have increased the size of the book greatly but would have added little to its usefulness. Perhaps something more could be said for the inclusion of editions of texts primarily of linguistic interest. Very often editions of Old and Middle English texts contain in their introductions materials of more importance to the student of language than separate writings on the texts. Yet again a complete bibliography of the editions of Beowulf or of Chaucer would obviously fall out of the plan of Professor Kennedy's book.

Within the limits he has set for himself, Professor Kennedy's bibliography seems to be remarkably complete. Absolute exhaustiveness in a book of this kind is not attained in a first effort, but here is certainly a solid foundation on which later compilers may build with the comforting assurance that the heaviest part of their work has been done for them. Perhaps Professor Kennedy himself may be persuaded to proceed with a supplement to his bibliography, bringing it down through the five years that have passed since it was necessary for him to close his books.

## Wooden Ships

FORESTS AND SEA POWER. By ROBERT G. ALBION. $5.

Reviewed by THEODORE S. WOOLSEY, JR.

THIS is a study of "The Timber Problem of the Royal Navy 1652-1862" based on an exceedingly complete Bibliography as well as on manuscript sources in the United States, England, and France. In the Introduction it is stated... "Oak, like oil today, was a natural product very abundant at the outset, but liable to ultimate exhaustion," but the author might have emphasized the difference between oak, a crop to be grown in a century or more, and oil, a mineral to be mined and then never replaced.

The initial chapter on "Trees and Ship Timber" explains the construction of the wooden gun ships and the kinds and sizes of wood needed for the hull and masts. One is amazed by the corruption and bribery that existed in the civil branch of the English navy and when Lord St. Vincent tried to break the timber monopoly he had to yield because needed oak and masts were cut off and Napoleon threatened. With England's diminishing woodlands, with the Baltic supply cut off by Napoleon, and with the American Revolution on its hands no wonder England was "searching the world for timber." Notwithstanding such pressure for timber English conservatism prevented the use of sawmills until the end of the eighteenth century—long after the first American mill was established near York, Maine, in 1623. Even in 1860 "half the timber was converted by hand" in the British Isles.

Professor Albion has furnished such a multitude of detail that publication prior to 1917 might have saved the United States the stigma of its own wooden ship adventure. This accurate history of building wooden ships for England's navy might have warned our Shipping Board of wooden ship shortcomings, such as brief life, high cost of repairs, and difficult timber supply problems. To build and keep in repair her wooden navy at times seemed an impossible task for England. The greater the need for staunch ships the more difficult became the timber supply especially when it had to be convoyed from overseas. The more fighting, the greater the need for pine masts, for oak hull timber, and the more difficult its purchase and transport. "Great" and curved "compass" timber which had to come from isolated trees was often impossible to secure. This curved stock was vital to the frame. The stern post of a seventy-four gun ship required a single oak stick about 40 feet long and 28 inches thick. A foremast 36 inches in diameter and 108 feet long cost even in 1770 £100 and usually had to come from North America. This illustrates some of the difficulties in detail. Moreover the reservation of this large mast timber in New England forests undoubtedly irritated the Colonists and helped to start the Revolution. Such a royal preemption of naval timber was never a legal measure in England although a practice in France under Colbert.

The whole history of two centuries of ship building for the Royal Navy (1652-1862) was a succession of successful "muddling through." After the local supply of English oak ran short because of overcutting the sporadic attempts at reforestation began in 1580, failed to relieve the shortage. From 1608 to 1783 the available oak within the royal forests had decreased to about one-fifth the original amount while the demand had increased. No wonder England bought largely from the Baltic, Australia, and elsewhere. In 1840 sixteen-twenty-fifths of the oak was cut in England while in 1860 barely one-seventh; coupled with the actual shortage of timber was the widespread corruption, poor credit, monopoly, and selfishness of officials and contractors. Then too the use of unseasoned wood increased dry rot to such an extent that ships often had to be repaired before they were commissioned, incredible as it may sound. At the time of Trafalgar dry rot almost lost the battle.

It is interesting to surmise what would have happened to British naval power if the ironclad Merrimac had not blown up and rammed the Congress and Cumberland early in 1862. The end of the wooden warship came suddenly and by 1866 iron was used for the capitol ships.

The British sea victories seem to have been due to the men who commanded and sailed and fought the ships rather than to the quality of the ships themselves. Perhaps the stupidity of other nations helped but certainly England's naval success was not due to far sighted forest conservation.

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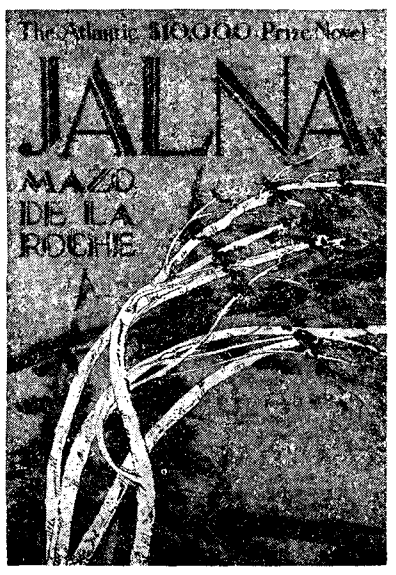


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Wey de tall pines grow,
*(Another voice)* On the banks of a river.
On the banks of a river.
*(Several voices)* On the banks of a river.
He trouble is done,
He's left dis world
On the wings of glory.
*(Voice)* On the wings of glory!
Out of life's storm,
*(Another voice)* On the wings of glory!
Out of life's darkness,
*(Several voices)* On the wings of glory!
He sails in the light,
Of the Lamb.
Away from his troubles,
Away from the night
*(Congregation)* In the light!
In the light!
Of the lamb.
He's gone to the kingdom above,
In the raiment of angels,
*(Voice of Sister)* In the raiment!
In the raiment of Angels!
To the region above,
An' he sleeps,—
*(Voices chanting throughout congregation)*
Oh, he sleeps,—
Oh, he sleeps!
On the banks of a river.
Way de tall pines grow,
On the banks of a river.
*(Congregation)* With the starry crowned angels,
On the banks of a river.
An' the flowers is bloomin'
In the blood of the Lamb.
*(Shrill voice of Sister and taken up by congregation chanting and swaying)*
The blood of the Lamb!
In the blood of the Lamb!
An' the birds is singin'
Wey de wind blows soft,
As the breath of an angel,
An' he sleeps!
Wey de tall pines grow,
On the banks of a river
*(Voice)* An' he sleeps!
*(Another voice)* Wey de tall pines grow.
An' his sperrit is guarded,
*(Several voices)* On the banks of a river.
By a flaming-faced angel.
*(Sister)* Yes, Jesus, of a flaming-faced angel
On the banks of a river.
Standing on mountains of rest.
An' he sleeps way de tall pines grow,
On the banks of a river.
*(Congregation)* Oh, he sleeps!
He sleeps!

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# Books of Special Interest

## Lives of Musicians

ARTHUR SEYMOUR SULLIVAN. By H. SAXE WYNDHAM. New York: Harper & Bros. 1927.

GEORGES BIZET. By D. C. PARKER. The same.

JOHANNES BRAHMS. By JEFFREY PULVER. The same.

Reviewed by KATHERINE RUTH HEYMAN

BOOKS of this nature usually serve one of two purposes; either they stimulate research or by attention to detail render further research unnecessary. A third purpose is served by the most recent output in the Modern Masters Series. Charm for the lay-reader is its dominant characteristic, especially in the case of Bizet.

The lives of the three composers represented lend themselves to attractive writing. Now that a movement is on foot in England toward making the Gilbert and Sullivan operas a national institution, interest is reawakened in the masterpieces of light opera produced by those two artists while holding before their faces the mask of comedy.

To separate the names of Gilbert and Sullivan is as hard as to effect a divorce between Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Shean. Yet W. S. Gilbert would never have found the facile music quill for his poetical conceits, had not Sir Arthur Sullivan been the zealous student in Leipzig whose earnestness was an example to his fellows, among them Edward Grieg.

*It is a very serious thing*
*To be a funny man.*

To one who, like the reviewer, can recall the monocle of Sir Arthur Sullivan by quick mirth dislodged as fast as ever it was replaced, the story of his life by H. S. Wyndham is a welcome addition to the meagre accounts previously published. The "one conspicuous failure, Ruddigore,"—to quote W. S. Gilbert,—put seven thousand pounds in his pocket as librettist. This in view of the fact that he and Sullivan found the burlesque stage "in a very unclean state" and resolved to "wipe out the grosser element," may be a timely suggestion.

If a criticism may be levelled at this volume, it is for the inclusion of too generous a number of Sir Arthur's friends of unequal importance and interest.

The study of Brahms by Jeffrey Pulver is not open to the same criticism, for although like Sullivan, Brahms "enjoyed a social success that was very valuable to him" at the beginning of his career, the names of Liszt, Schumann, Hanslick, and von Bülow are oftener to be found in these pages than local lights or hospitable friends. It appears in this volume that the famous phrase of the "three B's" was a *mot* of von Bülow, and the author of the book suggests the justification of the linking of the names of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms by reason of the homage rendered to Beethoven in the last movement of the First Symphony and to Bach in the Finale of the Fourth. These two symphonies appealed most directly to the exigeant Leipzig public and press of the late nineteenth century.

The genius for friendship which was a noble part of the endowment of Johannes Brahms, is well depicted in this volume. As the gossip is of the great, it is highly interesting.

A complete list of works from opus 1 to opus 122, dating from 1853 to 1902 appears as an appendix, with a parallel list of contemporary works of importance including the names of Berlioz, Liszt, Wagner, Verdi, and Strauss. Works by Brahms published without opus numbers from 1858 to 1902 are separately listed—a valuable contribution for the student.

The book on Bizet in the Modern Masters Series is by D. C. Parker and pleases with its sympathetic understanding of the composer's mind. It deals subjectively with Bizet, from the time of his effort to carry off the Prix de Rome, through his crossing the threshold from schoolroom to theatre, through the ghastly night when after Carmen's first performance its composer "wandered about Paris distracted, on the arm of Ernest Guiraud, a terrified witness of his despair and his tears."

The historic première of Carmen is impartially discussed, the various chroniclers quoted, and the net result is the report of the most reserved of them all: "The public showed its customary disdain toward him (Bizet)." "Carmen" being counted historically the first success after many failures, it is small wonder that the sufferings of Bizet on this occasion vanquished his energy and courage, and at the end of three months, killed him.

Calve is, quite fittingly, brought into the story of Carmen, inasmuch as her originality gave the opera some of its most characteristic high-lights in popular esteem.

To apply the words of the author of "Georges Bizet" to his own pages: "I venture to think that they bring us into close contact with the man himself." The phrase is used by Mr. Parker with reference to the letters of Bizet which are recommended as direct and not written with an eye to the gallery or to posterity. Quotations from these letters abound. A comparative chronological list of compositions adds to the value of the book.

## Racial Problems

THE RACIAL BASIS OF CIVILIZATION: A Critique of the Nordic Doctrine. By FRANK H. HANKINS. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1927. $2.75.

Reviewed by C. K. OGDEN

THE time was ripe for an authoritative survey of the Nordic controversy, and the Professor of Sociology at Smith College has provided one. Moved to wrath by the writings of Burgess, Madison Grant, McDougall, and Stoddard, he has crossed swords with them in a critical examination of evidence and assumptions. Returning from the funeral he proceeds to discuss the nature of race as such, the idea of pure races, the relations of race and nationality, race equality, race mixture,—and the future.

By judicious steps we are led to the very natural conclusion that race crossing as such is not biologically injurious. Rather does it widen variability and at least temporarily enhance racial vigor. All the important races are of hybrid origin. Many of the men of genius of western Europe were demonstrably hybrids. The Old Americans were hybrids at the start, and the later immigrants who are gradually absorbing them have brought with them musical, artistic, and literary capacities of which the Old American stock was relatively poor. Mulattoes are superior to negroes in intelligence, and many of them are superior in their biological inheritance to millions of white citizens. And so forth, until it becomes clear even to the least prophetic that the next apostles of Nordicism will in future find their work cut out for them in more senses than one.

Professor Hankins is able to award the Nordics, if any, quite a handsome palm for their share in building up the civilization which had its outcome in the Great War. But he would oil that palm to secure at least a backstairs entry to other racial ideals. In other words he would water its capital by selling other stocks to the eugenic purists.

The book is admirably documented from every angle, though it is odd that Professor Hankins cites nothing more fundamental than Bean and Todd on the cranial capacity of negroes. For a second edition, it is worth mentioning that Mr. V. Gordon Childe, author of that masterly work, "The Dawn of European Civilization," is not a Professor, but, like so many eminent English scholars, entirely unsupported by any university. It is important not to give the universities credit for more than they actually do, especially in a sociological work, owing to the illusion of the great American Foundations that by endowing Universities they are covering more than a fraction of the research which is crying for assistance. In this connection no mention is made of Dr. F. G. Crookshank's "The Mongol in Our Midst," by far the most significant document in favor of the view that both Mongoloid and Negroid traits are discoverable in so-called Aryan communities.

Racial problems and prejudices are likely to play so important a part in the future of America during the next decade that a new Department might well be created to cope with the situation. And for such a Department Professor Hankins would make an ideal Chief. He is high-souled, broad-minded, and clear-headed; moreover, he has a sense of humor and a vigorous pen. Few European Ministers have possessed such qualifications; whence the social troubles of the Old World. There are barriers which can be removed only by science, education, and diplomacy.

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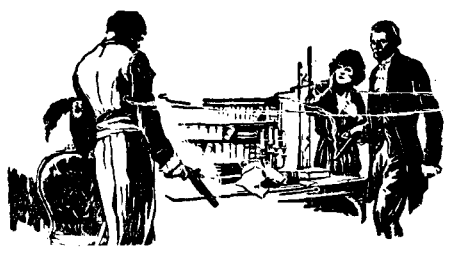

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# Literature Abroad

By Ernest Boyd

THE award of the Nobel Prize for literature to Grazia Deledda has raised once again the bewildered doubts which have so often been the only public reaction to the Committee's decision. Since the Prize was first awarded in 1901, to Sully-Prudhomme, some singularly obscure or mediocre writers have received it, as the list of his successors shows: Theodor Mommsen, Björnstjerne Björnson, Frédéric Mistral, José Echegaray, Henryk Sienkiewicz, Giosuè Carducci, Rudyard Kipling, Rudolf Eucken, Selma Lagerlöf, Paul Heyse, Maurice Maeterlinck, Gerhart Hauptmann, Rabindranath Tagore, Romain Rolland, Verner von Heidenstam, Henrik Pontoppidan, Karl Gjellerup, Carl Spitteler, Knut Hamsun, Anatole France, Jacinto Benavente, William Butler Yeats, Ladislaw Reymont, and George Bernard Shaw.

If I have recited this list of names, it is in order to remind the reader that Grazia Deledda is with Selma Lagerlöf the second woman to receive the award, and with Carducci the second Italian author to be so honored. Furthermore, when seen in the perspective of the entire roll of prizewinners, Grazia Deledda's name will not appear to be so inglorious as in the isolated announcement of the fact that the Committee had again selected a writer who meant little or nothing to the average reader. To say the least of it, she is as good a novelist as Pontoppidan and Gjellerup, and, if Selma Lagerlöf had not written one masterpiece, "The Saga of Gösta Berling," it might be argued that she and Grazia Deledda are of more or less equal standing, and rather similar in their simplicity of mood and matter. Von Heidenstam is assuredly as far superior a Swedish author as Carducci was an Italian to the ladies with whom their names are associated in this list.

The last book of Grazia Deledda's which was translated into English, "La Madre," was published in Italy in 1920. Prior to that there had been an interval of twelve years since any book of hers was offered to English-speaking readers through the regular publishing channels. "Ashes" appeared in 1908, following "After the Divorce" and "Nostalgia," which presented her in English for the first time in 1905. These efforts to acclimatize Grazia Deledda in England and America met with the same fate as had been the lot of her master Giovanni Verga, who, as Arthur Livingston has pointed out, was also belatedly "revived" after years of oblivion, but not even the endorsement of D. H. Lawrence could induce much enthusiasm here for the regionalist school of which Verga was the acknowledged leader.

⁂

Grazia Deledda was born in Nuoro, Sardinia, in 1875, and published her first book, "Anime Oneste," in 1896. The bibliography of her works is considerable: "Il Vecchio della Montagna," "Elias Portolu," "L'Edera," "Cenere," "Nostalgie," "I Giochi della Vita," "La Via del Male," "Il Nostro Padrone," "Sino al Confine," "Nel Deserto," "Colombi e Sparvieri," "Chiaroscuro," "Canne al Vento," "Le Colpe Altrui," "Il Fanciullo Nascosto," "Marianna Sirca," "L'Incendio nell' Olivieto," "Il Ritorno del Figlio." Just as Giovanni Verga and Luigi Capuana constituted themselves the interpreters of Sicilian peasant life, Grazia Delleda found her inspiration in her native Sardinia, and outside of that field her work is negligible. The daughter of humble peasants, provided only with an elementary education, she turned to literature, not as a career, but as an irresistible vocation. She had a real gift of story-telling, and she knew every phase of the primitive life around her as she loved every turn of the Sardinian landscape.

The "wild and melancholy beauty" of Sardinia, to quote her own phrase, aptly describes the character of the life and the people she has so patiently and lovingly transcribed in novel and short story. She is not a writer in the tradition of Mérimée's "Colomba" so much as Colomba herself become articulate. Her solid and healthy roots are in the stony soil of Sardinia; she is of that island, not a literary lady from the mainland studying the picturesque survival of primitive rural manners and primitive passions. She loves the stagnation of this sheltered corner of the world, where shepherds tend their flocks and make their cheese in the immemorial manner of the ancients, sheltering in the ruins of Phœnician temples, and knowing only the primeval emotions of love and hate, hunger and fear, experiencing only the elemental joys and sorrows.

Her first important novel, "Elias Portolu," was typical of the stories that preceded it and of many that were to follow it. It is the story of a Sardinian Paolo and Francesca, in which we see Elias returning to the wild life of the island after having been imprisoned on the continent. He falls in love with his elder brother's wife and becomes the father of her child. Then, seized with remorse, he becomes a priest, and even after his brother dies, he cannot feel free to marry Maddalena. The child dies. She must find another husband. In terms of this rustic tragedy Grazia Deledda contrives to poeticize and dramatize the clash of natural forces, and to relate the struggle of two consciences without interjecting psychological subtleties.

"Cenere" studies the demoralizing effect of education and the manners of the mainland upon a simple Sardinian youth, who is the illegitimate son of a farmer, and reaches the University of Rome. Books and ideas serve only to disintegrate his being. His life becomes a conflict between his spontaneous inclinations and his fictitious reasoning. He is ashamed of his mother before his wife; he is socially and morally exiled from the free hills of Sardinia to the cramped quarters of the city. Existence turns to ashes in his hands, as he loses both women, and stands puzzled before the riddle of his fate.

⁂

In 1900 Grazia Deledda married and settled in Rome, and there was some doubt as to whether she, any more than her characters, could survive the test of transplantation. Her novel "Nostalgie" dealt with that problem, and in so pessimistic a manner that she rather ingenuously prefaced it with an assurance that she was perfectly happy with her husband. The novel itself is a sort of Sardinian version of "Madame Bovary." The daughter of a once wealthy country family marries a government official simply because by so doing she can live in Rome. In Rome, however, life is not at all what she had dreamed. Her husband is poor and unimportant; his relatives are numerous and vulgar; their home is crowded. All around is the ostentatious display of all the luxury which the wife's vain soul craves, craves as she craves only the spacious comforts of her parental home in Lombardy, as she craves all the illusions of her girlhood. When she can stand it no longer, she leaves her husband and returns home, but there, too, is disillusionment; for she is a changed woman. When her husband finally comes to reclaim her he also is a changed man, but in easier circumstances. He has got the money to satisfy her desires, but he got it at the price of his honor and self-respect as a man. Her nostalgias are doomed to be ever unappeased.

After her first tentative efforts, "Elias Portolu" made Grazia Deledda famous much as "I Malavoglia" raised Verga above the mediocrity of his early novels. Seventeen years separate that work from "La Madre," but they have witnessed no development in the author's talent. The same qualities are in both books, but to a lesser degree in the last. This story of a mother whose heart and ambition are set upon her son's success in the priesthood, and who is almost defeated by the sudden paroxysm of wild love, lacks the essential psychological analysis, and loses its coherence by the shifting of the medium of observation from the mother to the son. The author still has her pleasant gift of description and her unfailing eye and sympathy for primitive folk, but the very limitations within which she excels are a limitation upon her success outside her own country.

If the intention of the Nobel Committee was to honor an Italian author, then, d'Annunzio, with all his faults, had the first claim. If the women writers of Italy are considered, Grazia Deledda has no claim that cannot with more reason be urged on behalf of Sibilla Aleramo, Ada Negri, or "Teresah." If one were to seek for an American figure of comparable importance, the name of Sarah Orne Jewett would suggest itself. Grazia Deledda is a conscientious craftswoman in a minor *genre*, at home only with her own people, an unpretentious and vivid story-teller. The translation helps her, for her Italian style is far indeed from perfect.

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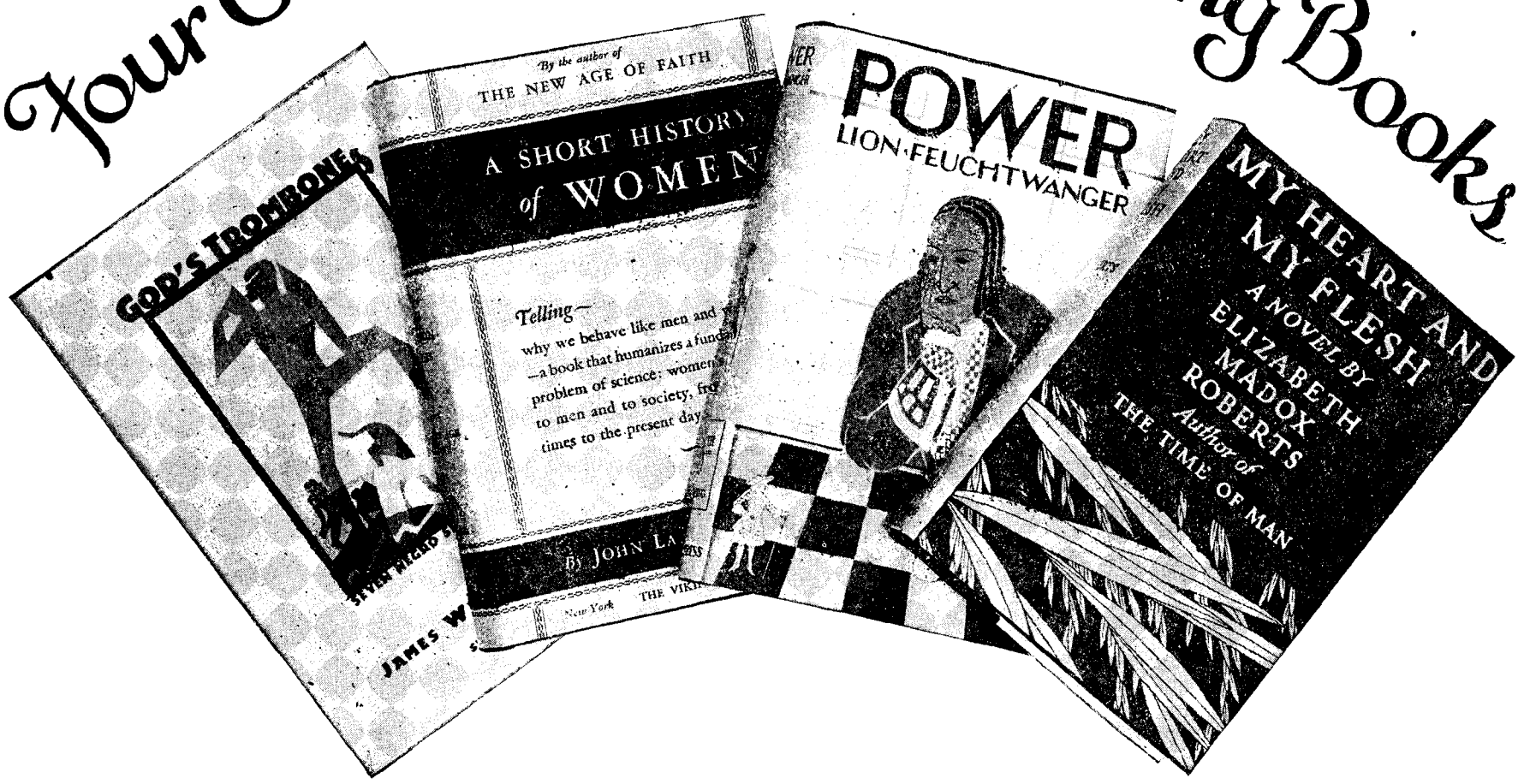


## [1]

### *Go Down Death*

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# Literature Abroad

## Love Letters

ERNST HAECKEL: HIMMELHOCH JAUCHZEND. Erinnerungen und Briefe der Liebe. Edited by HEINRICH SCHMIDT. Dresden: CARL REISSNER. 1927.

Reviewed by AMELIA V. ENDE

TO compile this volume of letters by his famous friend must have been a labor of love to Dr. Heinrich Schmidt of Jena. Whether a correspondence of such simple intimate character has literary value, is of secondary importance. The world which has known Ernst Haeckel as an eminent scholar and thinker, will learn to know him through this book as a simple human being, a man and a lover. But as such he is a unique figure in an age when sentiment seems to have been ruled out of the vocabulary even of poets.

The emotional gamut of these letters ranges indeed, like the song of Clärchen in "Egmont" from "Himmelhoch Jauchzend" to "zum Tode betrübt." Not a line in them indicates that Haeckel was a contemporary of Nietzsche and that during the latter half of his life the world about him was engaged in more or less morbid, coldly intellectual analysis. They are the sincere and naive utterances of unsophisticated youth. He had retained through his life the sentiment and enthusiasm of the generation into which he had been born. That a real scientist lived an idyl of almost medieval romantic love in a period which developed an appallingly large number of prematurely old skeptics and cynics who prided themselves upon having arrived at a so-called "scientific" reading of life, is, to say the least, refreshing.

Fellow students of Haeckel have dwelt upon the fact that in his youth he cared only for nature and science. He impressed them in his college years by his childlike ignorance of the world. His teacher, Osterwald of the Domgymnasium at Merseburg, remarked with some regret, that such purity of heart combined with such exceptional intellectual ability was extremely rare in those days. Heinrich Schmidt is inclined to call this purity an almost childlike unconsciousness, and says that it often brought Haeckel into painful conflicts with reality. But Haeckel himself barely refers to these conflicts which a young intellectual of our time would have dissected and traced to their remotest causes and depicted with the minutest details.

The book covers the four years of his courtship and the one and a half year of his wedded life, cut short by the death of his wife. That he did not marry again was comprehensible. He could not have found her equal, for she was an ideal mate for a man bent upon delving into the mysteries of nature. Being his cousin, she was from his youth intimately familiar with his work and his aims. She was capable of following his ideas, she shared his interests, she felt the same love for nature. In an autobiographical sketch written by him ten years after his loss, he says that only his devotion to his work saved him at the time from thoughts of suicide. He honored her memory in the dedications and the introduction to some of his later works.

Sophisticated readers may be bored by the "sentimental" effusions of the man Haeckel; but they will be amply compensated by the sprightly records of academic life in Berlin and Jena of the Herr Professor. For before they married and made their home in his beloved Jena he was in the habit of giving his fiancée in Berlin an account of almost every day of his life. Days spent in the lecture room and nights passed in solitary study alternated with meetings of congenial colleagues in some Keller, holiday hikes in the environs, pompous official festivities like the tercentenary of the university of Jena, etc. That such symposia were by no means dry in every sense of the word, no reader familiar with German university life will doubt.

A special feature of interest are the glimpses of oustanding figures in the scientific world of Germany—many of them known far beyond the confines of their country—which these records offer. The death of Johannes Müller, whom he worshipped as his master, deeply affected Haeckel. The names of Gegenbaur, Carus, Wislicenus, Du Bois-Reymond, Kuno Fischer, and many others are frequently mentioned. An amusing incident is the railroad trip during which Haeckel got into so heated an argument with a Prussian "Gardeleutnant," that Fischer repeatedly had to nudge him in warning. A letter to his father, dated a month later, gives a more explicit account of the affair and as the family feared a duel, offers Haeckel an opportunity to supplement his opinion of the Prussian Junker with a challenge of that institution which must have shocked many a conservative friend and patron. He says:

> I consider it not an iota more senseless, if two savages, as is customary in Madagascar, swallow poison, and from the effect of it upon their nerves, judge, which of them was right.

Speaking of courage he adds, that

> It requires evidently more courage to live and uncompromisingly to challenge widely prevailing prejudices, than to shoot another or let yourself be shot dead!

The book contains some very good portraits of Haeckel and of his wife, views of Jena and surroundings and some very good reproductions of drawings which Haeckel had made of Radiolaria and of a beautiful Medusa, which he had named Demomena Annasethe. He had an artist's skill in the use of pencil and brush, but had enlisted his gift entirely in the service of his science. This book, and the letters he wrote from Italy, from October 1859 to April 1860, and published under the title "Italienfahrt" are valuable human documents and offer some very delightful reading.

## A German Woman-Poet

NEUE GEDICHTE. By INA SEIDEL. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt. 1927.

Reviewed by A. W. G. RANDALL

WOMEN-POETS have not played by far so prominent a part in recent German literature as they did about a generation ago. In the latest anthologies they are hardly represented, with exception, perhaps, of Else Lasker-Schüler, and her poetical beginnings were in 1902. In the past three or four years new works have come from Ricarda Huch, but she long ago deserted poetry for history and historical fiction. During the present year we have seen the collected works of Lulu von Strauss und Torney, Irene Forbes-Mosse, and Agnes Miegel, the second including a number of new poems, but the place of each of these is fixed; it is unlikely that they will add to their reputation, which, incidentally, is deservedly high in German *Frauendichtung*.

They, and especially the first, are in the mid-nineteenth century tradition of German ballad-poetry, and will always claim a place in any general anthology of German lyrics. Among the newer women-writers Ina Seidel is perhaps the most deserving of attention. During the war she published a notable collection of poems entitled "Neben der Trommel her," and followed this up with an even more remarkable collection called "Weltinnigkeit." Subsequently she turned to fiction and published a number of short stories in two volumes called "Hochwasser" and "Sterne der Heimkehr," as well as a full-length novel called "Das Haus zum Monde." Now she has returned to what, in spite of the excellence of some of her prose, particularly the collection of stories in "Hochwasser," we may call her true *métier*, and in this new volume, besides certain lyrics taken, occasionally with slight changes, from earlier books, has produced some new work which calls for attention from any careful student of modern German verse.

Ina Seidel is not a ballad-writer; she is also not specifically a *Frauendichter*, drawing her motives from the psychology or history of members of her sex. She thus represents a departure from the earlier tradition with which the other women-poets mentioned already in this article are associated. She is first of all a nature-poet.

Her two "Erdenlieder" are a good example of her ecstatic vision of natural phenomena, and her ability to render it. The poem "Phlox" is a revelation of a flower never before, so far as we can recall, chosen as subject by any poet. Perhaps her most pleasing poem is "Ahorn," to the maple-tree. It may be quoted in full as a sample of her simple but profound feeling:

*Ich werde den Ahorn wiederfinden.*
*Einmal am Ende der Tage*
*Wird es sein, dass ich zu ihm sage:*
*Ahorn, wo warst du so lang?*

*Er ist alt und selig geworden,*
*Er nimmt mich in seine Aste,*
*Er wiegt mich im herbstlichen Neste:*
*Kind, wo warst du so lang?*

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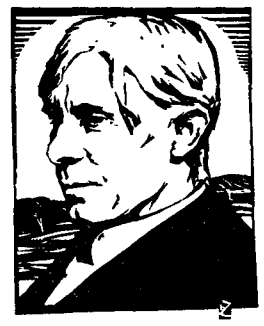

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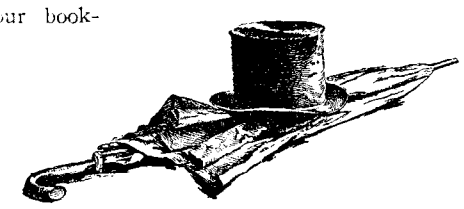

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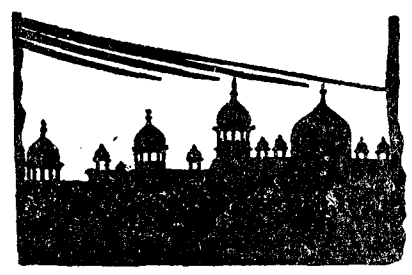


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# Books for Christmas Giving

By AMY LOVEMAN

THIS is to be turkey with "fixings." (We are writing our Christmas article on Thanksgiving eve and consequently our mind is dwelling rather on turkey and mince pie than on goose and plum pudding.) And the "fixings," we surmise, will be a considerable part of the repast, partly because they take space and partly because we inundated you recently with such a flood of titles that presenting again a long list of new publications seems decidedly a work of supererogation. At any rate it seems pleasant to us to let the poets put into categories the various classes of friends on whom it is likely you may wish to bestow books as Christmas presents. And by way of displaying our errancy, and as introduction to our suggestions, we quote you one who isn't a poet at all but a philosopher, and perhaps the most familiar of all men on the subject of reading—Francis Bacon. "Histories," he said, "make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtile; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend." There you have a rule of thumb by which to proceed in deciding what volume you should bestow, and a rule that will work two ways, either as a supplement to interests already in existence, or as a means of helping to correct tactfully some lack you deplore in a friend.

But to our categories:

*Men, some to business, some to pleasure take.*

It's for the former that we are prescribing, and we take it they are most of them interested in the problem that has had of late increasingly exhaustive discussion—that of instalment selling. If they are, and if they want a carefully documented discussion of the practice (one that devotes two stout volumes to an analysis that approves it in the end) Harper & Brothers has furnished the means to gratify their interest in Professor Edwin R. A. Seligman's "Instalment Selling" which it has just issued. Here is a work which is the fruit of the soundest scholarship and rests on a basis of meticulous regard for statistics but which contains matter of so much general interest that it has been first page news in the daily papers. A book that fits in very pertinently with its thesis, and that too, while the result of research and specialized knowledge is yet of a character to hold the attention of the lay public, is "The Road to Plenty," by Waddill Catchings and W. T. Foster (Houghton Mifflin). But stop! we are going too fast. We are afraid we have committed an indiscretion; the book hasn't been published yet, and for all we know won't be until after Christmas. We've been privileged to see advance galleys of it, and can assure you that it is an interesting volume, one that can be read with profit and enjoyment by those without extensive economic equipment and certain to be stimulating and provocative to the business man and economist. You might send the friend to whom you would like to give it when it does appear a card with its title upon it by way of a promissory note. Or you might tuck the card into a copy of Rexford Guy Tugwell's "Industry's Coming of Age" (Harcourt, Brace), another volume that would give the man of affairs profit and pleasure. (We can't say more about this book by Mr. Tugwell for he is one of our staff of *Saturday Reviewers* and we must be modest about our own. Besides he would check us up on any misstatements, so we won't give him a chance to do so.) And then there's a book that's been out somewhat longer, but that your friend the business man may not have read and is certain to find interesting when he does—"Getting Your Money's Worth" (Little, Brown), by Stuart Chase. It's a highly charged book with some spectacular pages and you don't have to be anything but a consumer to be interested in it. Then if this mythical business man (he's mythical because he's getting under our treatment to be a multiple personality; no one friend could be so showered with books by another unless he were taking up a collection for a library instead of celebrating Christmas)—if this mythical man, to resume our sentence, likes biography, there's Anna Robeson Burr's "James Stillman: The Portrait of a Banker" (Duffield), to give him, or Meade Minnigerode's "Certain Rich Men" (Putnam), or Arthur D. Howden Smith's "Commodore Vanderbilt" (McBride). That does for the business man. And now for the lawyers.

Our quotations are bewitched. We thought we had one in verse for the lawyers and now it turns out to be prose, and what's more from a novel, not from some source more cognate to the legal profession—from Scott's "Guy Mannering," to be specific. Here it is:

*A lawyer without history or literature is a mechanic, a mere working mason; if he possesses some knowledge of these, he may venture to call himself an architect.*

That gives you leeway in choosing books for the lawyers, for if Scott is to be trusted *belles lettres*, biography, and history should please or at least benefit them. We are sure they (or anyone else for that matter) would be interested in the second volume of Mark Sullivan's "Our Times" (Scribners), in which the United States of the period from 1905 to 1910 is recreated in its habit as it lived, with its events and its songs, its fashions and its customs, its politicians and its journalists, its virtues and its vices. And if they are New Yorkers they might also find Henry Collins Brown's "The Gay Nineties" (Valentine's Manual), a diverting retrospect, while in "The Diary of Philip Hone" (Dodd, Mead), edited by Allan Nevins (he's another of those *Saturday Reviewers* so we can't enlarge upon his book either) they would recognize a valuable and interesting contribution to the history of the city.

Every lawyer is a potential politician, and so certain to find fascination in the annals of men who have played their part in public life. Therefore such books as L. White Busby's "'Uncle Joe' Cannon" (Holt), Henry F. Pringle's "Alfred E. Smith" (Macy-Masius), "Up from the City Streets" (Harcourt, Brace), by Henry Moskowitz and Norman Hapgood, another life of the Governor, or Denis Tilden Lynch's "Boss Tweed" (Boni & Liveright), ought to prove welcome gifts to him. And then, of course, there's a work specifically of interest to lawyers in Lord Birkenhead's "Law, Life and Letters" (Doran). But we had almost forgotten that, according to Scott, to be proper lawyers they must know something of literature. So send them a book like Gilbert Murray's "The Classical Tradition in Poetry" (Harvard University Press), or "Democratic Distinction" (Scribners), by America's foremost critic, W. C. Brownell, or "The Heart of Thoreau's Journals" (Houghton Mifflin), by Odell Shepard, or one or more of the novels we shall mention later. And if you want something that has bite and brilliance send Elmer Davis's "Show Window" (Day).

That disposes of the lawyers. And now that we are through with them we remember our poetical quotation. We refuse to discard it; nay, it will serve a purpose still, and help us very neatly to dismiss the physicians without the pains of compiling a special list for them. Here it is:

*When lawyers take what they would give*
*And doctors give what they would take.*

Of course Dr. Holmes didn't intend it to bear the interpretation we are putting upon it, but just twist it to mean that lawyers would recommend for physicians the books which are adjudged suitable for themselves. Well, there are the doctors treated painlessly.

Now for your friend whose concern is with affairs of state. Milton has described him:

*With grave*
*Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed*
*A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven*
*Deliberation sat, and public care.*

Weighty must be the volumes for so important a person, biographies of those who have made history. First and foremost there is Ray Stannard Baker's "Woodrow Wilson: Life and Letters" (Doubleday, Page), two volumes of which have appeared, the first covering his early years and the second the Princeton period. Mr. Baker has had access to all of Mrs. Wilson's papers, and his work may be regarded in the light of an official biography and as therefore of prime importance. Those who find exciting reading in these chronicles of a President who held the helm during one of the most momentous periods in American history will doubtless also be interested in the lives of two of his predecessors with whose fame his will certainly be bracketed in the mind of the future—Washington and Lincoln. The second volume (Morrow), has just appeared, of Rupert Hughes's heretical biography of the former, as has also a volume entitled "George Washington: Colonial Traveler" (Bobbs-Merrill), by John C. Fitzpatrick, who some two or three years ago issued Washington's diaries in exhaustive fashion. Carl Sandburg's "Abraham Lincoln: The Pioneer Years" (Harcourt, Brace), has been published in an edition the low price of which brings it within the reach of the modest purse as a Christmas gift. You might even find it within your means to supplement it with Gerald W. Johnson's "Andrew Jackson" (Minton, Balch). But your friend of the inclination for statesmanship will be interested in the records of Europe as well as of his own country. Give him Emil Ludwig's vivid portrayal of "Bismarck" (Little, Brown), his "Genius and Character" (Harcourt, Brace), a collection of essays on figures historical and literary, and to show Ludwig in another guise, his plays which Putnam is publishing. Then you can select a volume for him from among the following books: Maurice Paléologue's "Cavour" (Harpers), Sir Sidney Lee's "King Edward VII" (Macmillan), two volumes of which have appeared after the death of their author, Alexander Kerensky's "The Catastrophe" (Appleton), and Thomas G. Masaryk's "The Making of a State" (Stokes). Perhaps someone among your diplomatic acquaintances might say with Shakespeare's "Vincentio":

*My business in this state*
*Made me a looker on here in Vienna.*

If so, send him Otto Ernst's "Franz Joseph as Revealed in His Letters" (Stokes), and Eugene Bagger's "Francis Joseph" (Putnam), for they will undoubtedly interest him. So adieu to the statesman.

And now to the clergyman—

*Who God doth late and early pray*
*More of his grace than gifts to lend;*
*And entertains the harmless day*
*With a religious book or friend.*

Wotton would have thought it fitting to send him such a volume as Charles Guignebert's "Christianity" (Macmillan), though how he might have felt in regard to Shirley Jackson Case's "Jesus: A New Biography" (University of Chicago Press), is more open to question. At any rate a minister of today would read it with interest even if perhaps not with approval. Doubtless he would also find much to engage his attention in E. Boyd Barnett's "The Jesuit Enigma" (Boni & Liveright), and Julian Huxley's "Religion without Revelation" (Harpers). And in all probability he would be exceedingly glad to get Paxton Hibben's "Henry Ward Beecher" (Doran).

"As the French say,"—we are quoting from Sydney Smith, "there are three sexes,—men, women, and clergymen." We have dealt with the first and last, and now for the third. On second thought, we are not going to do it—segregate the sexes in matters intellectual. What's readable by one is readable by the other (we forgot there were three sexes; our grammar's wrong; we mean by each). But yet we'll give woman preferential treatment by adding to the books all of which she may claim in common with men four specially selected for her.

*Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen*:
"A Childhood in Brittany Eighty Years Ago," by Anne Douglas Sedgwick (Houghton Mifflin).

*Here's to the widow of fifty*:
"A Good Woman," by Louis Bromfield (Stokes).

*Here's to the flaunting extravagant queen*:
"But Gentlemen Marry Brunettes," by Anita Loos (Boni & Liveright).

*And here's to the housewife that's thrifty*:
"The Questing Cook," by Ruth Jeremiah Gottfried (Washburn & Thomas). And that's that.

Have you a lover of beautiful books among your friends, one who is interested in typography and handsome bindings and all the appurtenances of fine bookmaking, who, in Sheridan's words, would like to see what he reads "on a beautiful quarto page, where a neat rivulet of text shall meander through a meadow of margin"? If so, undoubtedly he would be pleased to receive with your Christmas greetings, A. S. W. Rosenbach's "Books and Bidders" (Little, Brown), or William Dana Orcutt's "The Kingdom of Books" (Little, Brown), or such an enticing little volume as William Edwin Rudge has issued containing a facsimile of the manuscript of Horace Walpole's Common-place book, with its anecdotes on art, men, women, and manners. Looking at this last you might indeed exclaim with Austin Dobson:

*Not as ours the books of old—*
*Things that steam can stamp and fold;*
*Not as ours the books of yore—*
*Rows of type and nothing more*

But then, that quotation doesn't mean much as applied to Walpole for his works ap-

(*Continued on page* 386)

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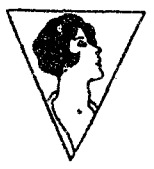

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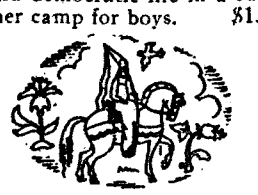

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# Points of View

## "Better to Bite"*

To the Editor of the *Public Ledger*:
SIR:

Though you expatiate on every other subject; yet in literary news I think your paper appears defective. The foreign presses teem with productions that might interest an English reader, and scarce a week passes, but something curious or useful is published here at home. To many of your readers an account of such new publications would be far more entertaining than a journal of battles or negotiations, an elopement, or a broken leg, the marriage of a celebrated toast, or the adventures of a mad cow.

In fact, the reader of a modern newspaper has some right to expect a little refreshment of this nature; we have fought over the German battles even to satiety, Pondicherry and Mocomogo are now our own; it is but just that the same page which is stained with blood and slaughter, should also refresh us with the exertions of benevolence or wisdom; and while it discovers one part of mankind busied in the destruction of the species, it should exhibit the other equally solicitous for their restitution.

I fancy you already perceive that I am only prefacing a design of supplying this defect in your paper for the future. Such I confess is my aim. I intend, with your permission, to furnish the *Ledger* twice a week, with an account of books foreign and domestic, with such other literary news as may contribute to entertain the public, or at least, such as I have found entertaining to myself.

In the execution of a task of this nature neither great abilities nor profound learning will be exerted by the writer, and no great discernment or sagacity will be required on the part of the reader. I could wish that we both brought only our common-sense to the business, and that while I write without pedantry and affectation, he may read with a desire of being pleased. If by this means we can both harmlessly pass over a splenetic hour, the end will be fully answered; to go deeply into the subject is not our design, to please the greatest number we must be superficial; all I intend to offer is a sort of a — — — *stage coach* account of books; we will leave to scholars the painful erudition of a Dyonysius, or the opposing systems of a Bayle.

It is true, that in this design I have been anticipated by many; we have already critics of every size to swarm upon the publications of the day, however I'm determined to add one more to the number, it is better to bite, than be bitten, I shall never stab a reputation for the joke sake; perish the jest which can excite any other sensation than that of a smile.

But I begin to grow tedious; I seldom read the introductory papers of others, and fancy few will read mine; it may not be amiss however to assure those who do, that, to use the common phrase, I shall make up by candour what is wanting in discernment, *I have no connexions to werp my integrity*, nor no enemies to repay; of the nine hundred and ninety-nine authors with which this city abounds, I don't recollect that I personally know above fifty-seven, thus it is more than eighteen to one, *cæteris paribus*, that my verdict is always sincere.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

**This letter appeared anonymously in the "Public Ledger" of August 19, 1761, and has never before been printed. In spite of its date, it is timely, and many a reviewer will recognize his own image. With other hitherto uncollected writings of Goldsmith it will appear in "New Essays by Oliver Goldsmith," edited by Ronald S. Crane, to be published by the Chicago University Press.*

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The November *Bulletin* of the New York Public Library prints for the first time in full a long letter from Bernard Shaw to Hamlin Garland, written in 1904, describing the way in which Henry George influenced his whole life. The library showed the chief treasures from its unrivalled Henry George collection in a special exhibition during the early autumn.

## Information Wanted

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Can you tell me and others who are much interested about who Dr. Brown, the author of "Slovenly Peter" was and what, if any, other literature he wrote? So far I have been unable to obtain any information about Dr. Brown or the earlier editions of "Slovenly Peter" in Germany or any of the American editions. As I remember, each of the American editions state that the text of the Fifty-seventh German Edition has been followed.

LEWIS CARROLL, II.

New York.

## Christmas Books

(*Continued from page* 384)

peared in print just like our own; this was a personal diary.

For the friends who relish particularly the intimacies of the personal life of authors there is a new volume of David Alec Watson's biography of Carlyle, one entitled "Carlyle at His Zenith" (Dutton), and a life of him by Mary Agnes Hamilton (Holt). Send along with these a copy of Hood's poems if you would heed the Autocrat's advice—

*A page of Hood may do a fellow good*
*After a scolding from Carlyle or Ruskin.*

And if by any chance that same friend is particularly interested in poetry, bestow upon him Lewis Browne's "That Man Heine" (Macmillan), or one of the recent volumes by the poets, Humbert Wolfe's "Requiem" (Doran), William Rose Benét's "Man Possessed" (Doran), Amy Lowell's "Ballads for Sale" (Houghton Mifflin), George Dillon's "Boy in the Wind" (Viking)—here's a new poet who needs watching—, H. Phelps Putvidson's "Tall Men" (Houghton Mifflin). vidson's "Tall Men" (Houghhton, Mifflin). And since we are not forgetting that this is the friend who has a particular taste for biography we must add here as a suggestion for him G. Jean-Aubry's "Life and Letters of Joseph Conrad" (Doubleday, Page), a fascinating revelation of the author's mind and manners of working. It's in two stout volumes, very handsome and impressive.

But

*Books you may carry readily to the fire*
*and hold readily in your hand are the*
*most useful after all.*

And what book can you hold more readily in your hand than a novel? Novels, indeed, for many reasons please the most heterogeneous mass of readers, so if you are in doubt as to the special inclinations of a friend send him or her (and especially if he is of the masculine persuasion will he like it) C. E. Montague's "Right Off the Map" (Doubleday, Page), a moving and lambent tale, written from the depths of a profound conviction, satirizing the methods by which nations are hurled into war, with enough of exciting incident to make it enthralling for its story alone. Or send him H. M. Tomlinson's "Gallions Reach" (Harpers), a book in which one of the finest writers of English living today depicts sea and jungle, and the wanderings of a man's soul as well as his body, or Robert Nathan's delicate and charming fantasy, "Woodcutter's House" (Bobbs-Merrill), or the last *jeu d'esprit* of John Erskine, "Adam and Eve" (Bobbs-Merrill), or James Branch Cabell's latest tale, related to Mr. Erskine's in title if not in manner, "Something About Eve" (McBride). Gauge your recipient carefully, however, before you sent him this latter volume, for it is not food for babes. If you want something of entirely different type you can choose from among Margaret Kennedy's "Red Sky at Morning" (Doubleday, Page), an able and interesting book; Elizabeth Madox Roberts's "My Heart and My Flesh" (Viking), a painful and a difficult one, but a novel which could only have been written by an author of ability; Mazo de la Roche's "Jalna" (Little, Brown), the *Atlantic Monthly* prize novel; Willa Cather's fine "Death Comes for the Archbishop" (Knopf), Rosamond Lehmann's "Dusty Answer" (Holt), and Thornton Wilder's "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" (A. & C. Boni). And how about sending to the man who may get one of these novels, just by way of recognizing his masculinity, A. E. Hamilton's "This Smoking World" (Century)?

These are but a few of the many books that await your giving. Surely no present could be more welcome. Why knit your brow trying to think out other offerings? *Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books:*
*Why all this toil and trouble?*

We purposely suppress the first part of Wordsworth's quotation.


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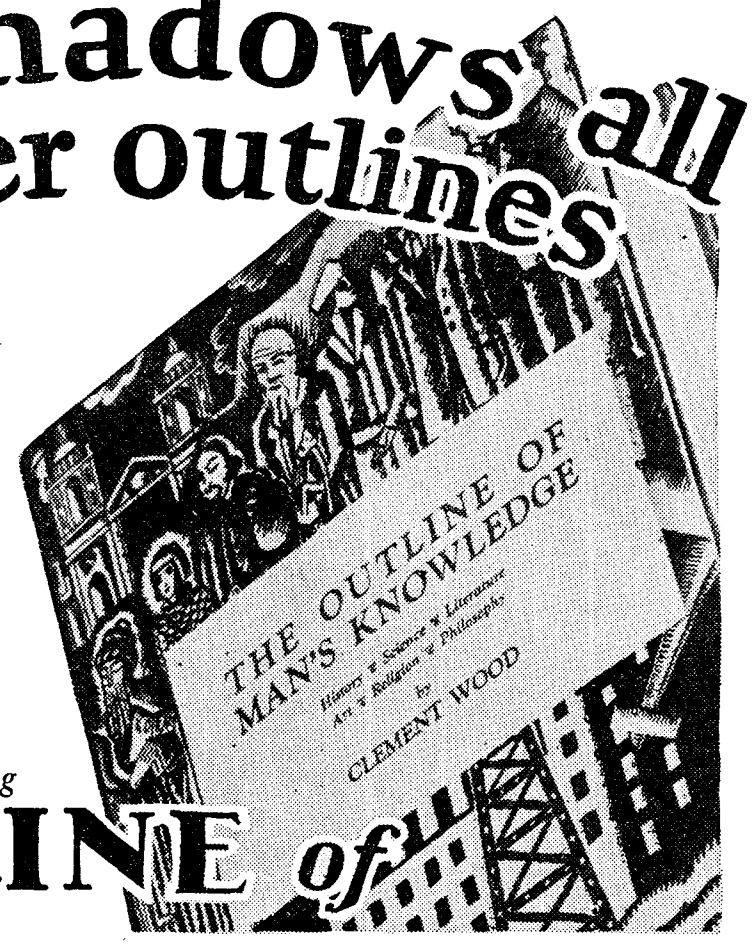


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# Jottings of a Learned Profession

By Wilson Follett

## I. The Profession

By Wilson Follett

THIS is a day of suddenly and vastly increased interest in books. Not that the interest is wholly a civilized one, or that it necessarily has much to do, at first, with the improvement, or even the production, of literature. But the increase is an unquestionable fact, of importance to everyone who is engaged at any point of the long and involved process which includes the creation, the production, the distribution, and the consumption of books. It is a fact which has also its eventual importance to literature. However materialistic the tone of most present discussion of the problems connected with book-production, the fact that such discussion is now both possible and common denotes a real increase of opportunity along the whole chain. The author, the decent publisher, and the ambitious bookseller can, if they do their work well and coöperatively, make capital out of this renewal of interest and turn it to the uses of better reading matter—not merely of more pieces of reading matter per capita. And if they do this, the art of criticism and, more important, the judicious reader himself are going to be the ultimate beneficiaries. Briefly, more of the public will be more civilized than it now is.

At the moment, the increase of interest is revealed by a set of wholly non-literary symptoms. The following are some of them: (1) The recent considerable increase in the number of American publishing houses, which shows a tendency the opposite of that responsible for the amalgamation and centralization of nearly every other kind of commerce—the recent absorption of one great house by another being vastly important, but not typical. (2) The increase in the amount of business done, and in the number of titles handled, by houses which specialize in cheap reprints, and the consequently greater number of books which stay in print beyond their first two or three seasons. (3) The greatly accelerated tendency of all successful publishing houses to outgrow their own sales organizations—to issue more books than the number for which they can secure adequate distribution. (This is the real sense of the frequently heard complaint about our overproduction of books. The actual fact is that, by comparison with Germany, Russia, or Scandinavia, we as a nation, are conspicuous for a rather disgraceful underproduction. We have simply allowed production to forge ahead without adequate care for the channels of distribution; the reservoir is over its banks only because there is no adequate system of irrigation ditches.) (4) The number of persons who have lately inaugurated small book-shops or book departments, or thought seriously of doing so—a number so considerable as to have called into existence a special advisory organization, the Book Sales Promotion Bureau. (5) The rapid republication of partly forgotten classics (whether by special organizations or by the regular general publishers) in uniform editions and series, usually at modest prices. (6) The application on a large scale, as through The Book-of-the-Month Club and The Literary Guild, of the idea that large economies and large profits can be effected by applying the magazine-subscription idea to the circulation of books.

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It is to be noticed that all of these symptoms have to do with books as merchandise, as the subject-matter of a business. If anything is characteristic of the kind of attention which the public now has to spare for the processes by which its reading matter is purveyed, it is the preoccupation with purely, or at least primarily, commercial considerations. There is nothing more certain to fire the national blood, or to make better news, than the rumor of any sort of price-cutting venture. When, for example, The Literary Guild inaugurated with an enormous advertising campaign its project of distributing books of regular publishers at lower prices than non-members would have to pay, the resulting quarrel between The Guild and the publishers became a front-page issue for day after day in metropolitan newspapers. The Guild's printed matter put all its emphasis on the propagation of literature, but that was not the point that attracted the attention. The public, *via* its daily journals, went straight, as usual, to what interested it; and what interested it was, as usual, fundamentally a matter of dollars and cents. Could anything better illustrate the anomalous situation in which "the book business" today finds itself, or the deviousness of the labyrinth in which certain basic meanings become lost to sight?

A book is originally written, let us say, by an individual who has had what he believes to be a new vision of something, and who has worked in the conviction that his vision will have significant validity to a great number of his fellow men if he can succeed in getting it communicated. It is accepted, for communication to all and sundry, by a publisher who, if he cannot see his way to a financial profit on the transaction, can at least figure out a fair chance of avoiding an unbearable loss—and who, if he undergoes a loss, will have to pay the author something for the privilege of incurring it. It is put into type by a printer at so much per thousand ems, and into covers by a binder to whom it is an article 5⅛ inches wide, 7½ high, and 1⅜ thick. It is described and sold to bookstores, or in larger quantities at a larger discount to wholesalers, by travelling salesmen who travel on expense accounts and sell on salaries plus commissions, and who in all likelihood will never read the book which it is their job to extol. In the bookshop it suddenly becomes an article of retail barter, salable for the first time to all comers at the price originally marked on it by the publisher. Only then has it a chance to resume, if it find a lucky reader here and there, some fraction of the quality of vision which was its original cause for being. And what a trivial fraction at the best! for we must remember the truism (pointed out, I think, by Mr. Cabell) that, had a blind poet not expended certain years of his blindness in the production of an epic called "Paradise Lost," the utmost consequence would have been that a few persons would now put in an occasional spare evening rather differently.

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A book may be the precious life-blood of a master spirit, but it spends the most crucial transition period of its existence as a unit consisting of so much paper, cloth, and printer's ink, weighing about sixteen ounces in the aggregate, and significant in pretty much the same way that a theatre-ticket is significant.

Manifestly, about everything that happens to a book, from the time its author writes "The End" to the time it falls into the hands of a more or less like-minded reader, happens on a basis of the lowest commercial expediency. At one end of the chain is an artist creating, at the other an audience appreciating; but everything in between seems to be a crass materialism, expressive of neither the artist's purpose nor the audience's delight—in fine, the complex process constituting "the book business." How, in the face of such a condition, is it possible to advance the claim that book-production is the subject-matter of a learned profession? Is not the public, are not the newspapers, correct in putting the emphasis on the money which is to be made out of books, and are they not justified in imputing a basic cynicism to the considerable number of persons who attempt to make their living out of what are grandly called the fruits of authorship?

It is the contention of these paragraphs that they are quite wrong, and that the business of publishing differs from practically every other money-making enterprise in ways, and to a degree, which classify it among the learned professions, and emphatically not with ordinary commerce. It is, to be sure, an affair of buying and selling; if successful, of buying at a lower price to sell at a higher. But then, so is every other recognized way of supporting life. The author sells his output, the lawyer his advice, the teacher his learning, the surgeon his skill, the laborer his time; the clergyman receives money for the very prayers that he offers; even the man of inherited wealth takes income for the use of his resources. The difference which we all feel between the learned professions and the commercial ones is that the latter exist by driving the shrewdest bargains they know how, whereas practitioners of the former are well content to take part of their pay in the satisfaction of doing exactly the work which they were born to do.

The typical manufacturer may be honestly sentimental about the merits of his product, he may gratify himself with the idea that his function is "service," he may work himself up to the evangelical fervor of actually believing the assertions in his own advertising; but the final test of his motive is whether he ever lets one dollar get away from him without a definite expectation of getting two dollars back for it—the answer to which question is, *tout court*. He does not. He admits, even proclaims, this himself.

With the professions it is otherwise. A doctor is not worth his salt who does not often find occasion to say: "Any fee that you could afford would mean little to me. You had to have the help—and I can easily take it out of the next patient who has more than he knows what to do with." And what should we think of a clergyman not disposed to preside with equal willingness over the weddings and burials of rich and poor, or of a teacher of young men not regularly addicted to the habit of handing out at every demand a thousand dollars' worth of free advice? And as for literary critics, have we not seen them postpone their own immortal works from year to year, and sometimes until after the funeral, while privately spending hundreds of hours gratis over the manuscripts of friends and complete strangers, giving the guidance and encouragement which build reputations? Authors affect great contentment with the apothegm, "Those who can, do; those who can't, criticize;" nevertheless, the good critic is a creator who is the victim of his own awareness of other persons, and also of the inherent claim of any literary problem, be it his own or another's, to the most searching analysis he can devote to it. Any critic who has done his work vigorously and honestly has but to glance through a handful of the publishers' lists for any current season to trace the record of his own unsigned collaborations.

In short, the activities properly describable as learned professions contain their large element of disinterestedness—of the spirit which, granted the ordinary minima of subsistence, takes its reward in terms of the chance to do its proper work. The business mind is preoccupied with what it can make; the professional mind, as soon as the elementary necessities are provided, is concerned primarily with what it can give, first for mere self-respect, secondly for the advancement and the dignity of the profession.

Now, it is the present point that the complicated job of publishing books contains this same large element of disinterestedness, and that for this reason it is to be grouped with medicine, the law, the church, teaching, architecture, criticism, and authorship itself, when these are practiced according to their best canons, and by no means with the vending of real estate, chewing-gum, brass tacks, steel rails, advertising space, inventions, petroleum, bonds, and political influence.

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The publisher must, to be sure, make money if he is to continue to publish—and, be it added, if he is to be at all serviceable to any of the most idealistic purposes of authorship. But the decent publisher is not much concerned with *how much* money he can make. He is always paying for things that he can't afford with the proceeds of things which he can a little more than afford. He is always putting his profits back into his business by issuing books that gratify his personal taste or feed his pride without filling his pocket, or by effecting improvements in the physical properties of his books—improvements for which no one has asked and which few will even notice. He is always standing by authors whose books do badly season after season, in the conviction (too often blind) that he will be eventually paid by the cumulative results of his work for them, or out of a simple feeling that *noblesse oblige*. And he is always paying too heavily for imponderable values, such as the prestige of having on his list a particular author to whom he has to concede such terms that he could far better afford to let some other house publish him.

The test of this difference between the spirit of publishing and that of the purely commercial proficiency for which America is notable among the nations is in the attitude toward the publisher of the simon-pure business man himself. A hard-boiled real-estate man, at his luncheon club or in a foursome at the country club, hears a group of his publishing acquaintances talk about the characteristic problems and worries of their calling. He listens, with bewilderment which changes to amazed incredulity and presently to something suspiciously like scorn. And at last he bursts out: "You mean to tell me that you spend even a minute of your time thinking about transactions which aren't practically sure to return you a profit? Why, I never heard of such a thing. My business would go to wrack and ruin in three months if I conducted it in any such fashion."

There you have it. The publisher does, in sober fact, expend nine-tenths of his ingenuity and his time (and all of his lying awake nights) over affairs which, after he has put in the hardest work of which he is capable, may or may not escape a deficit. The few affairs which are certain to yield him a profit call for relatively little work on his part, and in the main they are relatively uninteresting to him.

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And, by the way, there is no one who does quite so much lying awake nights. The publisher is working at a twenty-four-hour job; all his conversation is shop-talk; and, because he feels that his shop is the most interesting in the world, he is pretty well content with the fact that, when he locks his office door at night, he is far from having locked his troubles in and left them behind—whereas even a gambler in stocks sees few occasions in a calendar year that require him to be agitated about his affairs outside bankers' hours.

A New York publishing friend, reputed brilliant and uncommonly successful, was talking to me about himself and his business. "It is high time," he said, "that——— [his wife] and I were thinking about building ourselves a decent house and moving out of this jam, which is certainly no place to bring up children in. The business has got going unexpectedly well; yet in all these years we haven't made it do anything appreciable for ourselves personally." He grinned, and the grin was a little rueful. "Somehow the profits are all reabsorbed into improving the game. The business is all we have to live on, and yet we persistently treat is as a plaything, a luxury. Can't seem to help ourselves."

This is so typical that different readers will supply at least eight or ten different identifications out of their own acquaintance, and without going off Manhattan Island.

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HE history of printing is not, taken by itself, of very great consequence, but there is no other single historical aspect which supplies so complete a microcosm of the life of a community. Anyone who feels inclined to challenge this claim may profitably spend an hour or two with "Salem Imprints, 1768-1825," issued by the Essex Institute, of that city. Whether one wishes to get a comprehensive outline of what was going on in the United States during the most important half-century of its existence, from a fresh point of view, or desires to know intimately the life of a small New England community which has left a sharp impression upon state and nation, these pages will supply about all that is necessary.

An appendix of fifteen pages records the evidence of the ownership of books, from the Salem probate records, prior to 1830. The titles we would like to know about are rarely mentioned, but Purchas's "Pilgrimage" is listed in 1647; and "English Physician," "Discourse of Comets," and the "Battledore Book" in 1689. There were several sizable libraries, and in 1743 an inventory mentions books in the hall, the lower room, and the chamber entry. The Hon. William Browne, who died in 1764, was a real collector, leaving pictures, tapestry, a library, and medals. The earliest detailed list is that of a Cabot who died in 1786. He had the *Spectator* and *Guardian*, with other magazines, "Hudibras" and Lady Montague, "Pomphreets Poems," Congreve and "Paradise Regained." William Pyncheon, three years later, had an impressive legal library, besides Milton and Montaigne, "Tristram Shandy," and the "Sentimental Journey," and Prior.

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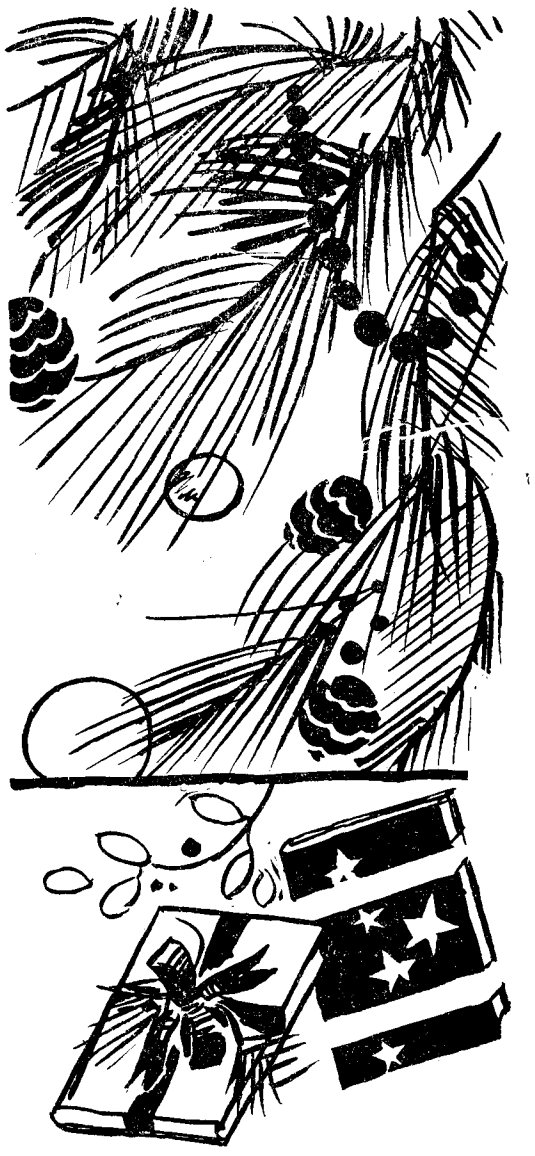

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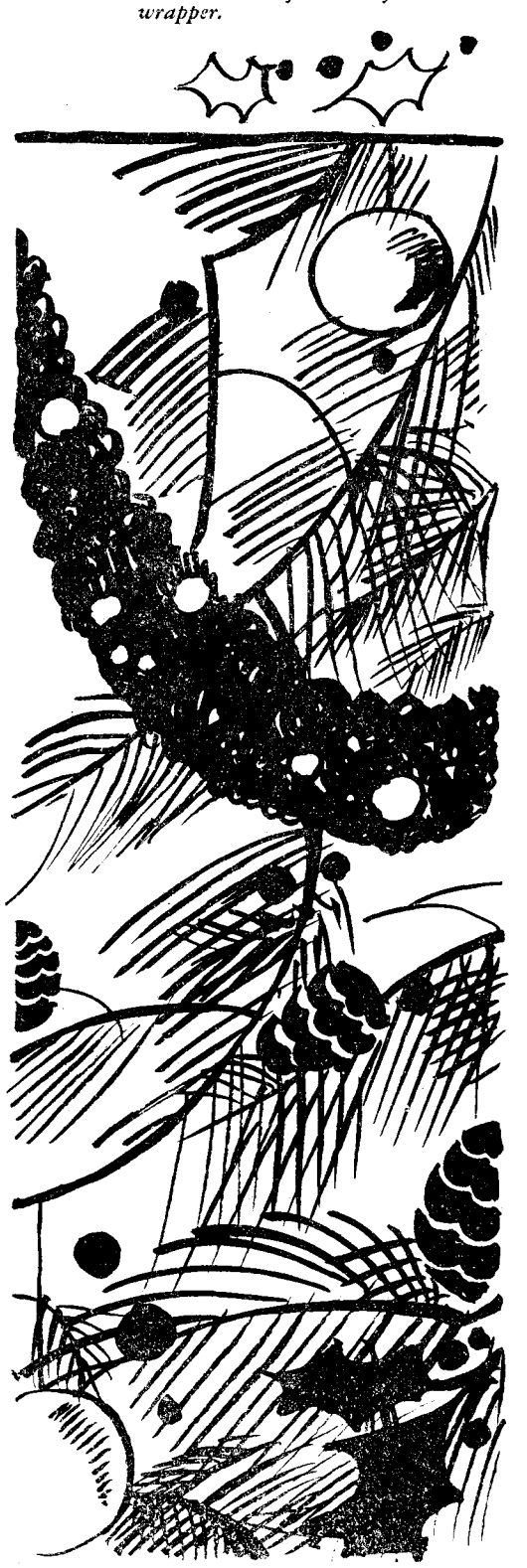


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# The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

*Competition No.* 8. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best continuation in not more than 400 words of Sterne's "Sentimental Journey," the narrative to be taken up at the precise point where it breaks off in the original. (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of December 5.)

*Competition No.* 10. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the most original short Nursery Rhyme for a Twentieth Century Child. (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of December 12.)

*Competition No.* 9. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best Christmas Carol in the American vernacular. (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of December 19.)

Competitors are advised to read very carefully the rules printed below.

## THE FIFTH COMPETITION

WON BY CLARIBEL WEEKS AVERY, OF TILTON, N. H.

A prize of fifteen dollars was offered for the best unrhymed poem in which every second line was borrowed without alteration from the work of some "standard" poet.

THERE were more than a hundred entries. Unfortunately the majority of competitors, apparently thinking they had to deal with an easy problem, strung their lines together haphazardly. Their poems smelled not of the lamp, but of Bartlett and the index to the "Oxford Book of English Verse." *Eleanor Hoffman*, in spite of the fact that all her quotations were taken direct from the Index of First Lines, contrived to manufacture an amusing poem. But, to borrow her own and Milton's words—

*Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more*
*The wasted stamp, the Editor's regret . . .*

*P. S.* wrote an amusing fragment in which he admitted abandoning Bartlett in favor of Ward's "English Poets." *Loretta Roche* offered two poems of which "Anniversary" was the better. It was a little surprising to encounter among her "standard" authors a number of living, youthful poets—Joseph Auslander, Virginia Moore, Countee Cullen. A line had to be drawn somewhere and I regretfully drew it here. "Standard" is a misty word, but not so misty as all that. Another competitor very tastefully used a line of my own, but I ungratefully disqualified him. *Tom Nob* plucked most of his quotations from the humorous poets, while *Edith Hull* ingeniously separated her "standard" poets with a parenthetical chorus in the manner of "Two red roses across the moon." Both these entries needed rhyme to make them convincing. The many competitors who wrote regretting that rhyme had been forbidden will be given an opportunity to show what they can do in a few weeks' time.

In "Silver Threads Among the Gold," *Margaret Ladd Franklin* faced the problem courageously.

*For I will give you if you will not stir*
*Before my pen hath gleaned my teeming brain,*
*The strangest interweaving—now a line*
*Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,*
*And, close beside, one dark and lustreless . . .*
*If any sparkles than the rest more bright,*
*'Tis Shakespeare's, Milton's, Dryden's —mine 'tis not.*

A number of rival "interweavings" were indeed strange; for instance

*My feet unloosened from their bond,*
*Pregnant with celestial juice,*
*And gathering roses all the way*
*The richer cowslips home.*
. . . .
*When I consider how my life is spent*
*I pray the gods to let me once be glimpsed*
*By woman wailing for her dæmon lover,*
*That with her I might taste of life again.*
*See! the white moon shines on high;*
*Take me safely home at last!*
*So long as men can breathe and eyes can see,*
*My heart, my life, my soul I'll give—*
*A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse.*

It was difficult to make a final choice. *H. E. Rich*, *B. D. Brown*, *L. H. Phinney*, *H. H. Hall*, *J. M. Dobbs*, *M. F. Hastings*, and especially *Josephine Whittier*, *R. E. Wade*, *Garland Smith*, and *Slightly* deserve honorable mention. I salute future prize winners in *Herbert McAneny*, *Lenore Glen*, and *Tu Quoque* though this time their poems had to be set aside in favor of *Claribel Weeks Avery's* "Song of the Sword." Miss Avery was wise enough to choose her quotations from the obscurer corners of poetry and thus the seams of her fragment are less obvious than most. It reads like an original poem.

## THE WINNING POEM

SONG OF THE SWORD

By Claribel Weeks Avery

*I am Siegfried, son of the Volsungs.*
*Upon my red robe, strange in the twilight,*
*Flickers the ruddier light of the flame.*
*The gray magician, with eyes of wonder,*
*Stands to watch while I forge me a sword.*

*Dawn is dim on the dark, soft water.*
*All night long has been labor and prayer.*
*What now, O Watcher?*
*Red as slaughter*
*Morning comes on, and thy sword is alive.*
*Giants and sorcerers cannot withstand it;*
*Iron and silk are as one to its edge.*

*Was I born under the sun or the thunder,*
*Saved for what purpose, bred to what master,*
*Or what was the service for which I was sold?*

*He who has weaponed thee orders thy goings.*
*With His hands full of flowers—red burning flowers,*
*He is marking the way for thee, Swordman of God.*

Line 2 is borrowed from Morris's "Arthur's Tomb," line 4 from Tennyson's "Merlin and the Gleam," line 6 from Swinburne's "Swimmer's Dream," lines 8 and 9 from Cawein's "Watcher on the Tower," line 11 from Longfellow's "Saga of King Olaf," line 13 from Gilbert Parker's "Right of Way," line 15 from Emerson's "Ode to Beauty," and line 17 from May Probyn's "Beloved."

## THE SIXTH COMPETITION

A prize of fifteen dollars was offered for the most convincing extracts from a diary supposed to have been kept by Edgar Allan Poe during his schooldays at Stoke Newington.

WON BY F. H. G. OF PASADENA, CAL.

THIS competition was less popular than most. Perhaps lay-people are less interested in morbid psychology than they were a few years ago. I hope so. Not many competitors allowed their imaginations to play freely with the probable fears and superstitions of the boy Poe. Recent biographies, notably those by Mr. Hervey Allen and Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch, pointed several easy ways, while it would have been easy to take a few hints from M. Maurios and Mrs. Barrington. Most entries, however, stuck too closely to the few known facts concerning the poet's English schooldays.

*Slightly* makes him encounter Charles Lamb in the street—an ingenious conception, but it was done too abruptly. *Lois K. Pelton* made some juvenile verses in her extracts. to be convincing, but she wrote well and was brave enough to include some juvenile verses in her extracts *Olympia* and *W. A. S.* deserve honorable mention for two careful atmospheric fragments. The prize goes to *F. H. G.* for some extracts that do not maintain the standard of his second paragraph with its magnificently sinister "O, if I had been that boy!"

THE PRIZEWINNING EXTRACTS

Stoke Newington, June 17, 1819. Saturday. This afternoon the great gate with iron spikes was opened again to let us out for our weekly walk. How thick and heavy is that gate! Has any boy ever dared try to climb its dreadful heights and run away? The older boys say that one did, but will never tell us how fearful was his punishment.

I also heard them talking of a man named Eugene Aram, Who was once an usher in our school and was a murderer! I have shuddered since, each time I have passed the dark old house in the town, where he did his awful deed. Yet I long to go in and see the very room, and hear how it was done. They say he hid his deed so cleverly that no one could discover the murderer; yet remorse so filled his mind that he told the whole story of his crime to one of the boys —pretending it was a dream! O, if I had been that boy! It is a fearful tale, and stays in my mind at night.

June 25, Sunday. To church with all the school this morning, and how strange it seemed again, as always on Sunday, to see the Master of our school ascend into the pulpit of the church and preach to the people! It seems impossible that he is our severe master, for he is disguised in a white wig, high and vast, long silken robes, and such a gentle face. Why must he lay them all aside, even the kindly smile, when he turns schoolmaster?

June 28. Today our Midsummer holidays begin, and Mrs. Allan has consented that I spend them with Tom Harwood. Huzzah! His father will come in the coach to fetch us. Then we shall shake hands solemnly with the masters, and go out through the front door, by which we never enter or leave save on some great day. And how joyfully we will wave farewell to the old schoolhouse and the boys, as we drive off in the coach through the great gate.

## RULES

(Competitors failing to comply with rules will be disqualified.)

1. Envelopes should be addressed to "The Competitions Editor, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 25 West 45th Street, New York City." The number of the competition (e.g., "Competition 1") must be written on the top left-hand corner.
2. All MSS. must be legible—typewritten if possible—and should bear the name or pseudonym of the author. Only one side of the paper should be used. Prose entries must be clearly marked off at the end of each fifty words. Competitors may offer more than one entry. MSS. cannot be returned.
3. *The Saturday Review* reserves the right to print the whole or part of any entry. The decision of the Competitions Editor is final and he can in no circumstances enter into correspondence.

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# PERSONAL

**WILL THE SWEET YOUNG THING** who spoke so rapturously of Vienna and ARTHUR SCHNITZLER at dinner last Tuesday night at the Ritz Carlton, please divulge her identity to a diffident admirer who yearns to send her a copy of SCHNITZLER'S new novel, *Daybreak?* M. L. T., care of The Lotos Club, New York.

**IF THE ENERGETIC GENTLEMAN** who was all excited by the report that *Trader Horn* is earning more than $4,000 a week in royalties wants to save himself a futile twenty-four-day trip to Johannesburg, South Africa, he will take our word for it that ALFRED ALOYSIUS HORN is having the time of his life at the age of seventy-three and is not particularly interested in twenty-year endowment policies—*The Inner Sanctum*, 37 West 57th Street, New York.

**PERSONAL FOR H. L. MENCKEN:** One hundred and seventy-five thousand of us have bought WILL DURANT'S book, *The Story of Philosophy*, in eighteen months—Homo Sapiens Americanus.

**ALFRED ALOYSIUS HORN:** Now that you're heading the best seller lists, you can find out how to invest your royalties by reading my new book, *Financial Advice to A Young Man*—MERRYLE STANLEY RUKEYSER, Columbia University.

**LIBERAL BONUS WILL BE** paid for a genuine first-edition copy of *The Story of Philosophy* by WILL DURANT. Must have a real *first*, as I have copies of all twenty-three editions since. Collector, Grolier Club, New York City.

**LOVER OF WISDOM** who inquired for personal information about WILL DURANT is respectfully referred to his latest book *Transition, A Mental Autobiography*. This story of a philosopher in love with life tells all. Simon and Schuster, Inc., Publishers.

**FORMER SWEETHEART** who wants to know why the engagement was cancelled can ascertain for himself by looking up page 99 of JEROME MEYER'S new handwriting book, *Mind Your P's and Q's*. No H-7 man for me! Please return my letters. With handwriting analysis craze sweeping the country, I must protect myself—Doris.

**CLUBWOMAN SEEKING THE** higher life in a big way is urged to read the new novel by Franz Werfel—*The Man Who Conquered Death*. If you raved over *Goat Song*, *Juarez and Maximilian*, and *Verdi, A Novel of the Opera*, you will be thrilled by this little epic of heroism; if WERFEL is a new name to you, we envy you the exaltation of discovering him for yourself—Phi Beta Kappa, Vassar College.

**FOLLIES GIRL SEEN LEAVING** the stage door last night with a copy of WILL DURANT'S book *Philosophy and the Social Problem* is invited to attend a seminar on *The Story of Philosophy* at the University next Tuesday afternoon.—Ph. D., Fordham.

**THE TRUTH ABOUT HEARST,** the private life of *Ludwig van Beethoven*, and the inside story of GILBERT and SULLIVAN will be revealed in three distinguished biographies now being completed, respectively, by JOHN K. WINKLER, SAMUEL CHOTZINOFF and ISAAC GOLDBERG, and scheduled for early 1928 publication by Simon and Schuster. Advance orders now being received—Bookseller, New York.

**IF THE MULTI-MILLIONAIRE** with the pernicious habit of violent overbidding wishes to escape a b vouac at the Bowery Bread Line in the near future, he is confidentially advised to rush out for a copy of the new book by the world's champion bridge player, *Volume Two of Lenz on Bridge*. He is also reminded not to hazard his family fortune by trying to play contract without first contemplating the 554 cups, medals and other trophies won by Lenz in bridge tournaments, and then prayerfully studying *Lenz on Contract Bridge*—B. R. F., Knickerbocker Whist Club, New York.

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL** for F. P. A.: You were the first to announce the coming of the cross word puzzle age, and the first to sing its requiem. As we said last year, you were right the first time and wrong the second, because the latest *Cross Word Puzzle Book* (8th series) is still snuggling on the best seller list, and all the Simon and Schuster puzzle books together are romping along gaily in their second million. You just can't "discourage them." PROSPER BURANELLI; F. GREGORY HARTSWICK, and MARGARET PETHERBRIDGE.

**FIVE OUT OF THE FIRST TEN** current best sellers in general literature, from all publishers, bear the imprint of SIMON AND SCHUSTER. Sundry luscious details about these books and other notable works that *ought to* be best-sellers, will be disclosed on application to your bookseller or the publishers for the current catalogue from *The Inner Sanctum*.—Richard L. Simon and M. Lincoln Schuster, 37 West 57th Street, New York City.


*The* MONTHLY BULLETIN *of*

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***The Ten Best Sellers**

September 19 to October 17

**General Books**

1. **We, by Charles A. Lindbergh.** July 26. (Putnam) $2.50.
√2. **Trader Horn, by Alfred A. Horn.** June 10. (Simon and Schuster) $4.00.
3. **Now We Are Six, by A. A. Milne.** Oct. 14. (Dutton) $2.00.
4. **Mother India, by Katherine Mayo.** May 26. (Harcourt) $3.75.
√5. **Transition, by Will C. Durant.** Sept. 30. (Simon and Schuster) $3.00.
6. **What *Can* A Man Believe? By Bruce Barton.** Aug. 23. (Bobbs-Merrill) $2.50.
7. **Napoleon, by Emil Ludwig.** Dec. 15, 1926. (Boni and Liveright) $3.00.
√8. **Story of Philosophy, by Will C. Durant.** May 24, 1926. (Simon and Schuster) $5.00.
√9. **Mind Your P's and Q's, by Jerome S. Meyer.** Sept. 19. (Simon and Schuster) $1.90.
√10. **The Cross Word Puzzle Book, Series 8.** Aug. 26. (Simon and Schuster) $1.35.



Tell your book-seller these books are

**WANTED**

( ) *Daybreak*, a novel by ARTHUR SCHNITZLER . . $1.50
( ) *Trader Horn* by ALFRED ALOYSIUS HORN . 4.00
( ) *The Story of Philosophy* by WILL DURANT . . . 5.00
( ) *Transition, A Mental Autobiography* by WILL DURANT . . . 3.00
( ) *Philosophy and the Social Problem* by WILL DURANT . . . 2.00
( ) *Financial Advice to A Young Man* by MERRYLE STANLEY RUKEYSER 3.00
( ) *Mind Your P's and Q's* by JEROME MEYER . . . 1.90
( ) *The Man Who Conquered Death* by FRANZ WERFEL . . . 1.50
( ) *Volume One of Lenz on Bridge* by SIDNEY S. LENZ . . . 2.50
( ) *Volume Two of Lenz on Bridge* by SIDNEY S. LENZ . . . 2.50
( ) *Lenz on Contract Bridge* by SIDNEY S. LENZ . . . 1.50
( ) *The Cross Word Puzzle Book* 8th Series . . . 1.35
( ) *Simon and Schuster Catalogue* . (free)

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# Fond of Animals

Verses and Drawings by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

## EQUINEIMITY

I DO so love a cheerful horse,
a coy, coquettish equine,
Though some are variable, of course,
And mooch along with meek whine;
But some, again, are oh so gay
I wonder how they get that way.
I simply shout to see them play,
Exhilarate as with weak wine.

They scamper champing round the lot,
They kick and whicker—*My* word!
An overplus of life they've got
To make their names a byword.
And so I love to see them skate
And crash across the garden gate
And paw my roof devoid of slate.
I never speak a shy word.

For Oh I love the agile horse,
The artful horse, the bold horse!
I never learned to ride, of course,
Nor even on an old horse;
But when the Spring is in the spinney,
Oh Gosh, I like to hear them whinny
And shake their legs so long and skinny
And hoof it, every foaled horse!

## DILEMMA

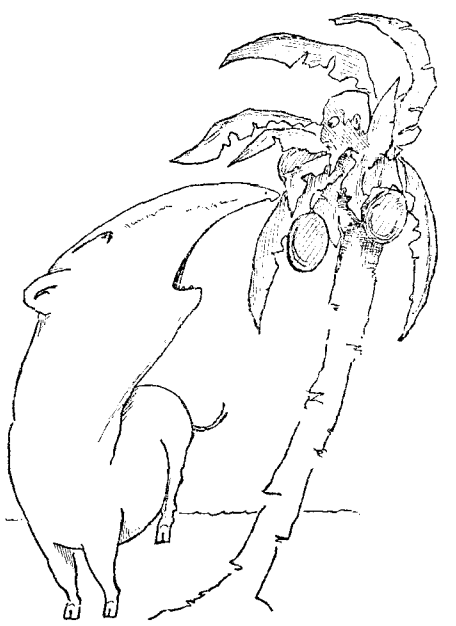
O TAPIR, be calm!
From that cocoanut-palm
A Fakir is asking an alms—
Or maybe no tapirs
Could ever cut capers
In countries with cocoanut-palms—
Or maybe no fakir
(And for the rhyme's sake here
*Fah-keer*, as pronounced, I eschew)
Could stare upon tapirs
Who seem to be gapers
At sights that are witnessed by few . . .

So I really don't think it will do.
Do you?

## SHEEPISH

IF—
You were up upon a cliff
Like the Rocky Mountain Sheep,
Could you grip—
Till it gave you the pip
Where the drop was so deep?
Could—
You be understood
As insouciant on the steep,
If
You were up upon a cliff
Like the Rocky Mountain Sheep?

I—
When so near to the sky
Get as giddy as can be.
I—
Couldn't teeter, looking shy;
That would never do for me.
I
Should immediately sli-
I-ide . . .
To the bottom in a heap
If
I were up upon a cliff
Like the Rocky Mountain Sheep.



## BROODING BABOON

BROODING baboon, ah the world is but mockery;
Monkery-unkery-apery-Jockery;
Life's a fandango and fate calls the tune,
Brooding baboon.

Many's the day when the women and men I see
Cause me to marvel at minds that in Tennessee
Flout the connection that scientists croon,
Brooding baboon.

Sometimes, compared to your poise and your pondering,
Most of mankind seem amazingly maundering.
You face the facts in the blaze of full noon,
Brooding baboon.

Little you reck of our wrath or our raillery,
Wound all around with your flourishing tailery,
Searching and scratching from June unto June,
Brooding baboon.

Sometimes the brows that you bend as appraising us
Would, if we thought, come extremely near fazing us . . .
Well, now I'm off—but I'll see you quite soon,
Brooding baboon.

## HAPPY TIGER

O TIGER, whom in hours of ease
Ingratiating cocktails please,
Down with that glass, you grizzled sinner;
And take the lady out to dinner!

The frosted shaker I'd not shout down,
But you're too much the Man-About-Town;
*I really am surprised at you*—
Would you act thus in your own zoo?

The tiger harked not my demur;
I think he has too thick a fur;
But probably—let's face the worst—he
Than *hungry*, is far better *thirsty*.

## IDEALISM

BLITHE bird that now with hasting gait
Across the clouds dost fare,
Art schoolward-bound, and art thou late?
(Not that I care!)

Blest bird that streak'st it through the blue
As though on wisdom bent,
I scarce have time to peer at you
When you have went.

The jellyfish is all at sea,
The bear snores in his lair,
But you are most decidedly
Up in the air.

I ponder on that look of strain,
That sharp regard of things,
I wonder why thou dost not deign
To use thy wings.

Blithe bird that now—but those are just
The words I used before!—
Blithe bird—uplift me if you must,
But O, don't make me soar!

## Postal Rates

THE National Association of Book Publishers has issued a pamphlet to bring to the attention of the public a matter which it consider of the first importance. It reads in part as follows:

For several years this Association has endeavored to persuade Congress that a wise public policy demands substantial reductions in the exorbitant postal rates now charged for the transmission of books through the mails. It has pointed out to the committees of the House and Senate having jurisdiction over postal rate legislation that the cost of manufacturing books has increased approximately one hundred per cent beyond the costs in 1914; that the selling price of books has increased since that time not to exceed fifty-five per cent, the difference having been absorbed by the book publishers through effecting the strictest economies in publication methods and the acceptance of reduced profits. It was pointed out that this situation had compelled the increased postal rates applicable to books to be borne by the purchaser, and that this had resulted in cutting down drastically the normal demand for books.

Discrimination against books in the postal rate schedules dates from the time when, in connection with the establishment of the parcel post system, the established flat rate of one cent for each two ounces, or fraction thereof, on all printed matter was abolished and books were classified with miscellaneous merchandise and zone rates imposed. This fundamentally changed the long-established policy of the United States Government of *disseminating educational matter at reasonable* and uniform rates to all its citizens, and resulted in a high premium being placed on the education and culture of the people in proportion to the distance of their respective homes from the great publishing center of the East. Experience has demonstrated that the increased postal rates have had the effect of substantially reducing the demand for books and the result is that the general public is being deprived of good reading matter. It has been conservatively estimated that seventy per cent of the books published *in this country, other than school* books, are absorbed within the environs of New York City. There is no question but that the high postal rates, materially increasing the price of books, have severely cut down the percentage of such books which otherwise would have been absorbed by the country at large.

Under the International Postal Union Convention preferential rates upon printed matter have long been established in recognition of the educational value of distributing printed matter by mail at a low cost. This Convention, prescribing a rate of one cent for every two ounces, regardless of distance, is in effect between practically all civilized countries of the world, including the United States. The exorbitance of our domestic rates is well illustrated by the fact that a two pound book can be mailed from New York to Japan for sixteen cents whereas it costs ten cents more (twenty-six cents) to mail the same book from New York to San Francisco.

Last year the American Booksellers Association passed a resolution urging upon Congress "the passage of legislation to reduce postal rates on books" and another resolution expressing to the National Association of Book Publishers its "appreciation of their effort to effect a reduction in the postal rates on books, and that we offer to them our aid in every possible way to further this object." The following resolution was adopted by the American Booksellers Association in convention, May, 1927:

"*Whereas*, existing parcel post rates to which books are subject are greatly in excess of the flat rate of one and one-half cents per pound applicable to similar reading matter contained in magazines and other second class matter, and

"*Whereas*, such parcel post rates are substantially in excess of express rates for books when sent to any point beyond the fourth zone, and

"*Whereas*, such exorbitant postal rates which must be borne by the purchasers of books result in greatly discouraging and to a large extent, absolutely prohibiting the purchase of books by the public,

"Therefore be it

"RESOLVED, that the American Booksellers Association urges upon the Seventieth Congress the enactment of legislation to effect a separate classification of mail matter for books and lower postal rates therefor, such as contemplated by Senate Bill

(*Continued on page* 410)

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—*Rebecca West, N.Y. Herald Tribune*

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# The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

## Art

ANCIENT FURNITURE. A History of Greek, Romand, and Etruscan Furniture. By GISELA M. A. RICHTER. Appendix by Albert W. Barker. Oxford University Press. $35.

Every once in a while among the litter of publications on the decorative arts a really significant book appears which marks a definite advance in some phase of historical research or esthetic understanding and is not a mere recompilation for popular consumption. This work of Miss Richter's is a striking instance. Since its subject matter concerns the classical archæologist as such, on the one hand, and the student of furniture and design on the other, the book can be regarded from two angles which, though both demanding sound scholarship are necessarily concerned with rather different aspects of the material involved and set the author a rather delicate double problem. The present reviewer, while feeling utterly unprepared to attempt any estimate of its merit on the first ground, feels justified in relying on Miss Richter's position as a classical scholar and the opinion of her colleagues as amply sufficient warranty of its archæological excellence.

From the point of view of the student of design and for that matter of the general reader, Miss Richter has accomplished the difficult task of making her investigation of very momentous value and vital interest. The book is exceedingly readable and made fully effective to the non-specialist by copious illustration and an absence of wanderings into archæological bypaths which are of doubtful value to those interested primarily in the objects themselves. The reason for this is that Miss Richter's own interests lie not solely in the classic field but include a very real and lively interest in and an appreciation of furniture forms as such, a fact which may be gathered from her references to the charms of the recent antiquities of Colonial America.

Miss Richter's investigations not only revealed the existence of a very great deal of reliable date afforded by vase paintings and sculpture, but that this material was fully capable of classification and, within reasonable limits, of chronological definition. These sources are further greatly reinforced by bringing together all the known survivals of actual pieces which prove to be much more impressive evidence than any casual and scattered acquaintance would indicate.

In brief, Miss Richter finds that Greek furniture in its simplicity of type reflected the simplicity of the Greek ménage. There was little save the couch, chair, small table, and chest. Within each of these groups there was however, a considerable variety of detail and a tendency to the development of definite and often successive types. In the main, however, more attention was paid to the refinement and development of two or three main forms, than to the further compilation or elaboration of detail—an interest which was distinctly dominant in later Roman times.

Judging from the results of careful investigation as shown in Mr. Barker's working drawings, the vast majority of classic furniture shows a sufficient regard for structural logic and propriety of form, but there are still a few questions that remain unanswered. Why, for instance, did the logical Greek mind permit the curious and disturbing incisions on either side of the rectangular leg of couches and chairs since these incisions reduce its effective section by at least two-thirds without giving the effect of lightness which may have been the aim? This seems entirely at variance with the entirely logical and delightful line and construction of the *Klismos* which makes its modern "empire" derivations so clumsy by comparison. Besides offering as exhaustive treatment of Greek forms as available data permits, the book gives a clear idea of their relation to the main Etruscan types. These, save for one or two innovations, such as the "barrel" chair, are merely Greek derivatives. Rather more monumental data is shown to be available for a reconstruction of Roman furniture. This, as we should expect, is remarkable for elaboration of detail and material rather than for refinement of form. No basically different types were evolved though far greater elaboration of treatment gives a much greater superficial variety.

No student of the industrial arts can afford to neglect Miss Richter's work as it throws a great light on the origin of many late European developments, and should provide an excellent basis for much needed investigation of early medieval forms about which so little is known. It is hard to show how the work could be improved either as to cogency of text or wealth of illustration.

## Belles Letters

NEW ESSAYS AND AMERICAN IMPRESSIONS. By ALFRED NOYES. Holt. 1927.

It is sufficient that Mr. Noyes's impressions were mainly agreeable to him. One turns in search of greater interest to the "New Essays," which are literary, for the literary impressions of poets always have a presumptive interest.

The first two—"The Dominion of Literature," and "What Shakespeare Means"—leave no memorable impression, but "The Tercentenary of Bacon, A Spurious Reputation," arrests the attention by its subtitle, and leaves one indebted to it for the quotation from Gabriel Harvey that Bacon "had an eye like a viper," and for the suggestion that the Cecils did not refuse to promote him because of jealousy, but because they suspected, or did not like, his character, which has a certain more or less obvious probability. But is it not over late to attack Macaulay's estimate of Bacon's relations to modern science, a subject on which Macaulay was almost as incompetent a judge as Mr. Noyes is, or as we are; he was a good forger of telling phrases, and his saying of Bacon that "he moved the intellects which have moved the world," being substantially a historical fact, is quoted with approval by men of very different opinions.

Bacon is too complex a character, a reputation too vast and varied, to be affected by small shot, or defined in brief reviews; too extensive and too much debated for any assurance as to exactly what it is. But at least it is not a "spurious" reputation on the grounds of Mr. Noyes's indictment; it includes strange weaknesses of character, a something cold and tortuous, a "yellow streak," if you choose; and it has not included for a generation or two past any claim to "the invention of the scientific method." Yet the "greatness" there is not there obscurely. Mr. Noyes's conclusion that he had "a third rate mind" is as rash and juvenile as Macaulay at his worst. You cannot turn from Montaigne's Essays to Bacon's without feeling that Bacon's is the more powerful mind—and Montaigne's was no "third rate mind." The Elizabethans were seldom—were there any of them?—of the impeccable sort. It is the vigor of the era that is so amazing.

In the essay on "The Real Secret of Shakespeare's Sonnets," Mr. Noyes seems to take the stand that, if there is any secret other than the secret of all great art, it is undiscoverable—which is probably a sound position. But the reason why one is constantly tempted to think the Sonnets autobiographical is that they give that impression, especially after the reading of any other contemporary sonnet series. One happens to know that Sidney's Sonnets were about a woman whom he loved and lost, but whether or not Shakespeare's covered any personal affair one happens not to know. Perhaps they seem more "real" only for the same reason that his plays seem more "real" than any other Elizabethan plays, namely that Shakespeare was made that way. At any rate, when an advocate of the poet's heart unlocked by a sonnet key is shown that many of those "autobiographical" lines were transposed from the "Venus and Adonus" or "The Passionate Pilgrim," it ought to rouse in him many a healthy doubt.

"A French View of Milton" is fortunately only in part conceived with Taine's view, —fortunately because Taine's "History of English Literature" is a book not only remarkable but absurd, and his criticism of Milton is not worth talking about. When Mr. Noyes is differing from Mr. Bridges and Saintsbury on Milton's verse, however, the differences are interesting and valuable.

The presumption of interest seems to be borne out. The English poet turned critic is at his best when he deals with the delicacies and enchantment of English verse. One may be permitted to suspect that the violence of Mr. Noyes toward Bacon is —perhaps unconsciously—connected with Baconian claims to Shakespeare's plays. It sometimes rouses even the judicious to violence, but the cause of the poet is too safe to demand the distinction of the chancellor.

HELLENISTIC CIVILIZATION. By *W. W. Tarn*. Longmans, Green. $6.

THEATRE. By *Edith J. R. Isaacs*. Little, Brown. $4.50 net.

## Biography

JOHN MACDONALD: Memoirs of an Eighteenth Century Footman. Harpers. 1927. $4.

This volume in the Broadway Travellers series is the first edition since 1790 of what the historian Lecky called John MacDonald's "curious autobiography." Copies of the one original printing had become so rare that, in spite of repeated advertising, the editor of the present edition had to get the text from the copy in the British Museum. John MacDonald was a person of great candor, little troubled with modesty, false or otherwise. As the anonymous introduction to the 1790 edition says: "He seems always to speak from the bottom of his soul; he confesses, on every occasion, his own weakness or folly. The simple strokes of truth and nature with which he paints the caprices, the vanities and vices of others, possess all the force of satire; and the attentive and enlightened reader finds a gratification in observing how objects strike a sound and sensible mind, free from all system and prejudice of education. . . ."

From the very beginning, John MacDonald's career was eventful. Born in the Highlands of Scotland in 1741, he was deprived of his parents at the age of five, served as postilion and groom until he was nineteen, and after that was valet, bodyservant, footman, hair-dresser, and general factotum to some twenty-seven different masters, some of whom he left voluntarily and some of whom dismissed him. He was a true cosmopolitan, ready to pack up his bag and be off to the ends of the world at fifteen minutes' notice. Curiously enough, he is the authority for the last moments of Sterne, to whom he was sent by one of his masters on some message. He was also for a time in the service of James MacPherson, better known as "Ossian."

The whole account sounds straightforward enough. He writes well, with no embroidering, telling more of his masters and of the places he visits than of his own exploits. He becomes quite famous for his ability to make "Queen of Scots" soup which took six chickens and eight eggs, and also for his skill in dressing hair in such a way that it stayed in place. His observations on India are especially good. He apparently had much to do with the popularization of the umbrella in England. When he first carried one over his head, he met with jeers on all sides, which so embarrassed his sister that she ran on ahead rather than walk by his side. Yet he lived to see the umbrella substituted for the sword.

Without having any great sense of humor himself, MacDonald has the faculty of setting down facts in such a way as to amuse readers. His vanity, and pride in his own handsome appearance, were apparently justified. In his amorous adventures, which are many, he makes himself appear more sinned against than sinning. In the end, however, he marries a Spanish girl with whom he had an affair on a previous trip through Spain. This volume can be highly recommended to all who would like to enjoy a piquant description of eighteenth century life, decribed from a rather unusual angle.

GOETHE. By J. G. ROBERTSON. Dutton. 1927. $2.50.

For the layman who wishes to get a striking picture of the pivotal events in Goethe's life, this little book is excellent. The style is crisp; the incidents related are picturesque. There are quite a few passages in it that make accurate translations of the original Danish of Georg Brandes's book on Goethe. These, however, are so many coincidences. It is in every sense of the word a "personal" biography and for this reason its most novel features will be contested far beyond the boundaries of Robertson's own camp—the University of London.

He claims that Goethe had a "mother complex." Could it not be said with equal truth that he had a father complex? It was from his father that he inherited his pompousness and imperiousness; his love of a big home with many pictures; his *Italienische Reise;* his inability to take an entirely charitable attitude toward others who were also successful; his hatred of onions, tobacco, dogs, and daily newspapers; his thrift, for Goethe was the first poet to make the equivalent of $112,500 in royalty and to hold on to it; and his utter lack of humor, for it is not on record that Goethe ever once in all of his eighty-three years laughed uproariously.

Robertson states without a syllable of comment that Goethe was once a general in the Prussian army. Let no one be misled; for "General Goethe" is to be taken even less seriously than the proverbial Kentucky Colonel. He contends that Goethe returned from Italy a wiser man but a poorer poet. A man cannot be a decent poet unless he is wise. He feels that it was an unfortunate incident in Goethe's life that he ever became attached to the Court of Weimar. It may have been; no man can know. But if it was, why not explain the weakness that made it impossible for Goethe to detach himself from this incubus? Of Goethe's admiration for Byron Robertson writes: "Goethe's estimate of Byron's literary genius often puts our confidence in his critical acumen to a hard strain." Not necessarily. Robertson perpetuates the right shabby rumor that Goethe's last words were *Mehr Licht.* The ripest scholarship has long contended that Goethe's last words, addressed to his grand-child, were *Gib mir dein Pfötchen* (Give me your little hand).

The interpretation is equally "personal." Professor Robertson asserts that Faust should have lost his wager and received the punishment. Why? Faust routed Mephistopheles completely by his doctrine that never-ceasing activity in the service of men is the only sound doctrine. Where is there any talk of beds of sloth? But having brought this up, why does Professor Robertson glide in silence around this reef? When the curtain goes down on the first part of "Faust" the hero has three deaths on his conscience; when it goes up on the second part of "Faust" the hero is lying on a bed of roses surrounded by kindly genii. What kind of punishment is that?

Appended to the text is a selected bibliography that ignores American scholarship; translations of the poems quoted in the text, translations that remind more of a camion than of an airplane; and a chronological list of Goethe's works containing both the years of composition and those of publication. This will prove helpful, and help is needed, for the world is still poles removed from a final opinion on Goethe.

## Drama

THE QUEEN OF NECTARIA, A Fantasy in Four Acts. By FRANCIS NEILSON. 1927. $1.50.

In a four-act drama of considerable length and less wit, mingling fantasy and satire, Francis Neilson writes of politics and, incidentally, of love in the Utopian city of Nectaria.

The vague and frequently invisible thread of plot, ornamented with sundry animadversions and episodes that occupy most of the volume, is ultimately concerned with the passion of the young, beautiful, and unmarried Queen of Nectaria for the son of the new American ambassador. The constitution of Nectaria, written by Snitternitch, the Lord High Chancellor, who is burdened with an ineffectual son, provides that the Queen can marry only a native Nectarian,—which Nectarian must be the scion of the Lord High Chancellor. The fortuitous suicide of Snitternitch junior, who "missed his mark all through life, but found it at the last moment," together with the intervention of a pair of gypsy fortune-tellers, who turn out to be the King and Princess of Ithaca engaged on a mission of propaganda in the interests of autocracy, result in the final gratification of the Queen's desire.

There is intelligence behind this play, but it lacks sprightliness and dynamic vitality. Because the author has not concentrated his material, the reader's impression is one of aimless diffusion and prolixity, enlivened by a few hits that are almost palpable, such as the American ambassador's observation that our Prohibition amendment is in no danger of repeal, since "one of the most active political parties in the States is the bootleg party—all prohibitionists every man jack of them—and rich—beyond the dreams of Crœsus."

"Beggars on Horseback" is still the most successful dramatic essay in America at satirical fantasy because, despite its episodic defects, it was quick with imagination and instinct with beauty and pathos. Neither in conception nor in execution does "The Queen of Nectaria" attain to high merit. The characters never emerge from their speeches; the fantasy is heavy-footed; and the satire is too good-natured to bite.

LAZARUS LAUGHED. By *Eugene O'Neill*. Boni & Liveright. $2.50.

(*Continued on page* 398)

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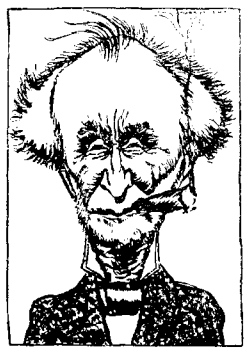
# THE YEAR'S BIG BIOGRAPHY



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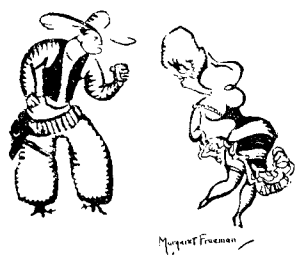


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# The New Books

## Fiction

(*Continued from page 396*)

HIGH ENDEAVOR. By ANTHONY GIBBS. Dial Press. 1927. $2.50.

Young Mr. Gibbs, Sir Philip's son, writes fluently and agreeably, with a keen faculty of observant characterization which usually hits the mark, but in this, his third novel, we have failed to find the necessity for drawing the hero as an absolute simpleton. John Marmaduke Biddle, though twenty-three and a university graduate, still stutters, has never been kissed, and is given to bashful, finger-in-mouth postures when in the presence of the tempting sex. Having fallen in love with Helen, the local vicar's lass, John defies his daddy, a vulgar button magnate, who has sought to make a gent of the boy, and runs away to London. There, determined to be a man, John finds work on a magazine, but is rashly followed by Helen, a born cut-up bent upon enjoying a fling ere she settles down as the lad's wife. Comes now a dissolute artist with coquettish whiskers to steal the girl's heart, bigamously marry her, and plunge our John in grief. Yes, everything turns out as one is likely to expect it to, and John finally has his innings. The writing, we repeat, is acceptably done, but the materials are a trifle too naïve to be worthy of the author's attention.

GESSAR KAHN. A Legend of Tibet. Told by IDA ZEITLIN. Doran. 1927. $5.

The legend of Gessar Khan was told and chanted around the camel-dung fires of Mongol *yurtas* in Tibet and Mongolia long centuries before Kublai Khan decreed his "stately pleasure dome." It is an epic in as true a sense as the "Iliad," though its Achilles is squat and slit-eyed and wins his lady in China instead of Troy, while its Polyphemus had twelve heads. And it is truly folkwise, for in Tibetan it is recorded in the vernacular, not the literary tongue; the first Mongolian version was printed in 1716, by command of the Emperor Kanghi. All its needs for enjoyment—it has been well retold in Miss Zeitlin's English version, and Theodore Nadajen's illustrations are sympathetic—is the proper mood on the reader's part. The pietist Buddhist introductory touch seems an accretion, for Gessar Khan's life and love and derringdo is primitive and rings true; and his story's jewelled descriptive splendors glow as through an amber Turanian glass.

THE JEWELLER OF BAGDAD. By FRITZ WITTELS. Doran. 1927. $2.50.

From a surface angle this Austrian novelist has given us a subtly and beautifully written romance of Abasside Bagdad, a human tragedy irridescent with all the glowing, colorful hues of its olden Saracen *milieu*. In this sense it is a tragic love story which stands on a level with some of the best in the "One Thousand and One Nights." But it also has a deeper meaning. The naïf and healthy sensuousness taken over from its Arabian model, in this story of the lovely Enis Aldjelis and of Achmed, who "loved her greatly, yet in his own peculiar way," overlays various inner truths of modern psychology—for the author is also a physician, like Schnitzler, and a psychoanalyst whose study of Freud and his teachings has attracted attention. And because they are truths, essentially as valid in Jimmie Walker's New York as in the Bagdad of the Caliphs, we can accept them in their sparkling, jewelled guise with no feeling of anachronism. Ludwig Fulda has said, "The mind asks for noontide clarity; but the heart yearns for the fragrance of dawn." In his "Jeweller of Bagdad" Fritz Wittels offers us eternal human verities in beauty's romantic setting. The translation is by Frederick H. Martens and Violet Brunton has supplied happily provocative drawings.

THE LORDLY ONES. By B. H. LEHMAN. Harpers. 1927. $2.

Mr. Lehman writes with insight and good sense. In "The Lordly Ones" his chief interest is in portraying the administration of an American university, and his protagonist is the President of a Western State University. Through the situations that arise in Roger Morlay's campaign for university reform we sense—usually indirectly, for Mr. Lehman is no propagandist for specific remedies—many of the problems that are vexing American education in its so-called higher branches. This Morlay is impudent enough to suggest that the proper business of college professors is to teach and the proper business of a university is to educate. Laymen probably believe that professors and universities are continuously and honestly thus engaged; it would be unnecessarily cruel to dispel their illusions. Mr. Lehman may, however, raise a few salutary doubts in the minds of those who know nothing of academic imbecilities.

Who are the Lordly Ones? Mr. Lehman suggests that they resemble Nora Willow, of whom he says: "Amid all the trivialities of people doing things they didn't want to do or doing things they wanted that had no point, she emerged an authentic human being. . . . There was something about her that made her right, like sunlight, like flowers, like the wind." In the novel we find several of these divinely dowered souls, each one of them well above the common herd in the things that make life important. Most of them are fundamentally happy; Roger Morlay, decidedly more ordinary than they, gropes a tentative and miserable way through his difficulties. The distinction is clear and appears to us a genuine reflection of our own experience. "The Lordly Ones" is decidedly interesting in its well differentiated characters and in its authentic academic atmosphere. We cannot speak well of its construction, however, for the plot is often weak and occasionally offensive to our sense of literary fitness. But there is a great deal of truth in the novel, and, in addition, a moral earnestness that is wholly admirable.

THERE WAS ONCE A CITY. By GODFREY E. TURTON. Knopf. 1927. $2.50.

Mr. Turton's romance is a beautiful book: it is beautifully written, printed, and bound. There is in the type as there is in the style the suggestion of leisurely elegance. Premeditated simplicity hangs like a veil over the lights and shades of its sophistication. It is a supremely self-conscious book. Whether or not the content is worthy of its panoply is a highly debatable question.

The story told is of the two Aellas, the River, unbelievably old, and the Queen, unbelievably young. They are both tempestuous, incontinent, and inconstant, they both pursue their course unmoved if not unconscious of what havoc follows in their wake, both know most strange and secret ways. The city where the two Aellas lived is located in one of those minute imaginary kingdoms of Europe long familiar as settings for light opera and the So-and-So of Such-and-Such romantic novel. But the inhabitants of this mapless land have undergone a radical change since the days of Rupert and Beverly of Hentzau and Graustark. They have become a subtle, sinful lot: court intrigue has ceased to be the forthright thing it was. With Mr. Turton it has become a series of innuendos ricocheting from epigrammatic tongue to epigrammatic tongue, never approaching the explicit when the insinuated is possible and seldom when it isn't.

The surface likeness of Mr. Turton's work to that of Ronald Firbank is unescapable and yet Mr. Turton's tale is not likely to appeal to Firbank admirers, for it lacks the chaotic depth of "Prancing Nigger" and "The Flower Beneath the Foot." In comparison with these and other Firbank books the extravagance in "There Was Once a City" seems almost economical. Much more imagination is demanded by Godfrey Turton, and much less is required. "There Was Once a City" is likely to prove caviare to the general, and, unfortunately, domestic caviare to the connoisseur.

CITY OF BREAD. By ALEXANDER NEWEROFF. Woodcuts by THEODORE NADEJAN. Doran. 1927. $2.50.

The Russian novelist, Neweroff, who died in 1923 at thirty-seven, came into literary prominence during the Soviet régime, was of peasant origin, a country school-teacher, and indubitably a writer of impressive gifts. In this harrowing and powerful book he describes the two thousand verst journey by foot and rail across famine-stricken Samara of a starving twelve-year-old boy in quest of the magical city of Tashkent, Turkestan, where, it is rumored among the refugees, bread is plentiful and cheap. Neweroff, himself a native of Samara, in 1921 to bring back with him the food that would save his family from extinction by starvation, performed that same terrible journey here undertaken and heroically survived by the imagined boy, Mishka. Perhaps it is due to his own actual experience of the famine that Neweroff depicts the horrors of the catastrophe with an exactitude and vividness which, though masterly, tend to make the story extremely uncomfortable reading. There is a brief sketch of his life written by Neweroff the year preceding his death.

KONG. By HAROLD KINGSLEY. Dodd, Mead. 1927. $2.50.

This is a florid tale of piracy in the South Seas. The book takes its name from the hero, a Gargantuan Javanese superman, who is represented as having as his ideal, the wife of a rich merchant-official in Canton. How he finally obtains her, and how, after being reduced to penury, they start life anew on the shores of some remote ocean, makes the plot of the tale. There is the usual tropical riff-raff of cut-throats and bhang smokers, and of course, the sensuous daughter of the tropic south whose dancing excites strong men to murder and whose sensuous limbs are constantly exposed, more for the edification of the masculine reader than for the males in the story. The English style of the book is indicated by the following sentence: "All the money he required, he could cajole from his father, whom he considered had no use for it, while he had."

CARRY ON, JEEVES! By P. G. WODEHOUSE. Doran. 1927. $2.

It is the earthly mission of Jeeves, filling most efficiently the rôles of nurse, brain, valet, housemaid, diplomat, philosopher, and all-round genius, to preserve the irresponsible Bertie, his young master, a sportive London toff, from colliding rudely with sundry aunts, uncles, irate parents, former sweethearts, uncongenial acquaintances, and other antipathetic persons. More, in the line of duty, Jeeves is also required to perform these invaluable services for Bertie's equally harassed playfellows. For instant response of the old bean in an emergency, the chap is priceless, don't you know. Rally round, Jeeves, here's a tough one, and presto! comes the answer. Bertie, alas, like his chums, is one of these hapless coves who had been left in the sun too much when he was a baby—all there in the upper, if you catch our meaning, but a bit cramped for space. In nine of these ten tales, Bertie relates the adventures of himself and his pals, while faithfully following out the directions of the awesome Jeeves, in safely transcending their varied dilemmas. We frankly admit our fondness for all the Wodehouse comics, and our especial delight in Bertie and the peerless Jeeves. The broad, rich, hilarious humor of the book places it, in our opinion, among the author's best.

THE STORY OF A COUNTRY TOWN. By E. W. HOWE. Illustrated Edition. Dodd, Mead. 1927. $3.50.

The original copyright of this American classic, Mr. Howe tells us in his foreword to this latest edition, was issued in 1882. He also narrates the history of the book, of the circumstances of its writing, of its first rejections, of the commendation of Howells and Mark Twain, of its later successes. The drawings for this new and handsome edition are by the well-known Wilfred Jones and decorate the volume excellently. "The Story of a Country Town" is a book that every American should read. It is intensely native and its style finely simple and sincere.

GOLD, GORE AND GEHENNA. By GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM. Bobbs-Merrill. 1927. $2.

We regret to record a fall from glory. George A. Birmingham (Canon Hannay) used to write with a unique charm of the remote villages of Western Ireland; his characters were delightful rascals, and his plots were cheerfully idiotic. To anyone who reads his two latest books (that under present review and "The Smuggler's Cave") and doubts the accuracy of our eulogy, let us recommend "The Search Party," "Spanish Gold," and "General John Regan" as samples of the real thing. But today matters are different, tragically different. The old *insouciance* has gone, the zest has faded away, and nothing but the machinery remains. The effervescence has turned to flatness, and the original gaiety to the dull grating of a worn phonograph record. "Gold, Gore and Gehenna" is a dull copy of earlier novels: we have the village of Ballymoy; we have Doyle, the inkeeper, as well as the gentry and the peasants, all according to the formula—but the saving spirit is lacking. Of course, if we had not known the earlier George A. Birmingham we should be less depressed by the later. But as matters stand, comparisons are inevitable. In short, we do not recommend this latest novel to any readers who have known what is now apparently lost. Newcomers may possibly be pleased with "Gold, Gore and Gehenna" and find it pleasant light reading.

(*Continued on page 400*)

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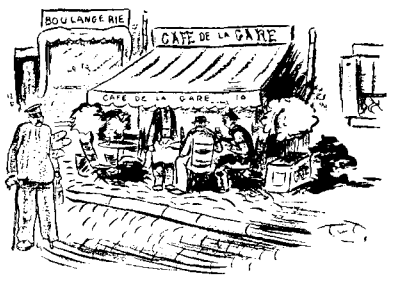


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# The New Books

## Fiction

(*Continued from page* 398)

THE MINIATURE. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS. Macmillan. 1927. $2.50.

One upon a time, long ago, Zeus invited the gods to witness a new artistic experiment. To the variegated spectacle of his innumerable worlds he proposed to add a being with intelligence like to his own but still subject to the laws of nature. The fortunes of this tiny creature, he thought, ought to be full of interest and amusement for the observer. Such is the beginning of "The Miniature," a brief history of the world as seen from the point of view of the Olympians. After an illuminating sketch of our pathetic yet progressive past, Mr. Phillpotts thows a prophetic glance down the future and sees humanity reach that stage of scientific efficiency and emotional atrophy toward which it has long been moving; and then sees beyond it to an unexpected dénouement which ends the miniature of Zeus forever. During the narrative there is much excellent philosophic talk bandied about among the gods where Athene, the up-lifter, and Dionysus, the poet, again and again vainly beg the imperturbable Zeus to interfere with his own artistic canons and save man from his fate. The Greek gods, the only deities endowed with urbanity and the sense of humor, are, of course, modernized by Mr. Phillpotts but without losing their essential Hellenic quality. The author's pessimism, here as always in his mythological tales, is so overlaid with wit and fancy as to lose its sting. His dark and sunny world is a paradise for the serenely disillusioned.

JUST BETWEEN US GIRLS. By LLOYD MAYER. Doubleday, Page. 1927. $2.

Readers of *Life* have already discovered Mayer for themselves. He has caught a comic modern idiom as successfully as Anita Loos or Milt Gross. His use of capitalization is anything but arbitrary. It conveys the very tone of voice of the sweet, brainless Young Thing of the day. We have always turned first to Mayer's modern girl soliloquies when *Life* lay before us. He has made a certain segment of contemporary conversational territory completely his own. Now, in the same idiom, he has made one of his Awfully Sweet Persons into a full-sized novel. If you liked "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" you will like "Just Between Us Girls," not because it is the same sort of thing, but because it is another sort of thing done with the same sensitivity to a different lingo. (And, whisper it not in Gath, we really think that "Just Between Us Girls" is funnier!)

Because I actually think the way they educate you nowadays is all wrong. I mean they do not make anything really interesting. For instance, just the SIGHT of that little red VERB book that we used to study at Farmington, my dear, used to be enough to make me roll over and butter myself with dismay, because I mean just the idea of that foul little book was too perverted, do you know what I mean? Honestly, my dear, the very thought of it simply slays me, no less!

THE POWDER DOCK MYSTERY. By REED FULTON. Doubleday, Page. 1927. $2.

This is a story of adventure and mystery combined, which takes a rapid start, never pauses for more than a moment, and ties up its many threads into a satisfying and breathless finish. The number of these threads is perhaps the only item to be questioned; there are almost too many different kinds of happenings, all going on within a short space of time. The lines of action are clear, however, through the separate episodes of danger or mystery. Since a brother and sister are the leading figures, both boys and girls will feel interest in following this tale of the islands of Puget Sound, an account which involves—among other things—a girl's first salmon-fishing in a little launch won as a reward for a brave rescue, encounters with revenue men and rum runners, a long-lost engagement ring and the results of its recovery, a weird escape from death in a skull-filled hidden rock cavern, a periodic lunatic and his threats on the explosive powder-dock, and constant encounters with the evil unknown Man in the Fish-Mask, who is finally identified as—but no! Is not some prospective reader's hair already rising? We shall not spoil things by divulging the mystery.

THE PANTHER. By GERALD BULLETT. Doran. 1927. $2.

The panther of Mr. Bullett's title is jealousy, always ready to pounce upon lovers and spoil their romance. Though this idea may have been planned as the central theme of the novel, it is not developed to anything like completeness. The novel is occupied (or better, preoccupied) with love affairs—love affairs hesitant, progressing, recessive, or merely tentative—until we are satiated. Two men (one a loafer, the other a successful novelist) prance here and there after three women (a wife, a bachelor girl, and one who is merely female), making complete fools of themselves. Probably all these futilities would be summed up by Mr. Bullett as a search for happiness. To the average reader the amorous problems here exposed are unimportant; he feels that the presentation lacks perspective. Of the characters, Virginia Ash, *la garçonne*, is tolerably convincing, and George Pendrook, the affluent novelist, is as nauseating as Mr. Bullett intended him to be. But "The Panther" is at best not more than a fair novel; it has too few ideas and too little power. Furthermore, it occasionally relies upon vulgarity to give it an ephemeral interest.

YOUNG ORLAND. By HERBERT ASQUITH. Scribner. 1927. $2.

Though Orland is a love child, the hardships and humiliations which usually accompany that stigma are never visited upon him. For in early boyhood he is adopted by an English country gentleman, Charles Mortimer, who is fully aware of his parents' identity, is given his benefactor's Christian name, and is thereafter reared with every care and advantage. Charles sends him to public school, to Oxford, on travels abroad, and Orland, at twenty-five, has proven himself, if not a very brilliant youth, at least a creditable and upright one. He is reading for the bar when the ruin of his foster father's fortune casts them both upon their own resources for a livelihood. Meeting adversity with quiet fortitude, Orland takes work as a shop-clerk, releases his fiancée from their engagement, and tries manfully to make the best of things. On the outbreak of the war he immediately enrols and serves with honor throughout the conflict, but at the close (and to his death we strongly object, for we liked him vastly) he is made to succumb from his wounds. The story is noteworthy for restraint, simplicity, the urbane purity of its style, and to those who set store by these modest, not too common virtues, we commend it without reserve.

THE SEASON MADE FOR JOY. By BARBARA BLACKBURN. Dial. 1927. $2

The Season, of course, is Youth, and its celebrants are the restless boys and girls of post-war England. They are all kids of twenty or less, sprung from the middle classes, stirred to revolt against a fogy-managed world, and tenaciously sure that the power lies with them to change their land into Utopia. A bright cub named Nicky, student at a London college of economics, is the leading rebel, seconded by his sister Fanny, his girl Pat, and the numerous circle of their comrades. Nicky is one of those lads who would conquer life early and with a single stroke, so simultaneously he quits college to wed Pat, founds a labor magazine, and plunges into the science of pig farming. It is a shock to him when none of these tremendous undertakings succeeds in rocking the foundations of the Empire, but he takes his medicine like a little man and even admits that he may have learned something. Miss Blackburn writes attractively, wisely, without unduly sparing her highbrow fledgelings from the switch. One should be grateful for her omission of night-club revels, for the absence from her story of the idle London rich, and for her creation of "Uncle" Gilbert, the kindly, aged bachelor of forty-five who seeks to guard the children from getting too grievously hurt.

THE LEOPARD IN THE BUSH: A Sequel to "Dalla the Lion-Cub." By CYNTHIA STOCKLEY. Putnams. 1927. $1.50.

The impish pranks of Dalla, the South African wild-woman, are continued in this mercifully short volume, which pretentiously records the events of her life while married to Colonel Valentia, the luckless Englishman whom she wedded after being widowed by the Boer millionaire, de Beer. For a few months Valentia stoically endures the ordeal of existence with Dalla, then takes refuge in the woods, parting from her in cold and bitter anger. Returning to her after the lapse of a year, he is thrilled by her gift to him of an heir, but the little stranger perishes in a fire due to Dalla's recklessness, and the tragedy irreparably widens the gulf of their estrangement. The World War serves to bring the couple together again, Dalla having grown tame and repentant in the meanwhile. We hope that this is the last we hear of her.

BACK FIRE: A California Story. By LOLA JEAN SIMPSON. Macmillan. 1927. $2.50.

There is substantial stuff in this first novel, but the book as a whole suffers from being over-long and, in its closing portion, from a frantic outburst of melodrama which is well-nigh fatal. The tale depicts the struggle, from childhood to maturity, of Marais Plover, a western small-town product, to escape the repressions of her convention-bound environment. In adolescence, her old-fashioned mother and the equally conservative neighbors had constantly nagged the girl, that when she is full grown and self-supporting, Marais departs for the city to assert her independence. Since she is a half-baked intellectual, she is attracted by the startling notion that her complete freedom can be attained only through the experience of living in sin. She is saved, horrors, from testing out her theories by the experience of a friend, who has tasted bitter fruit herself in putting similar principles into practice. The author relies too heavily on the accumulation of stolid trifles to carry along her narrative; her aptitude, however, for distinctive character portraiture leads us to regard her possibilities hopefully.

THE JURY. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS. Macmillan. 1927. $2.

Mr. Phillpotts has taken a comparatively sound and consistent murder mystery plot, adorned it with a great deal more characterization than is usual in a story of this type, and chosen to convey it to the reader in an indirect narrative by recounting the deliberations of the jury in the case. As a result much of its force is lost. "The Jury" is neither one thing nor the other; it hesitates to be an honest thriller, yet cannot awaken much interest in its carefully described twelve good men and true. Mr. Phillpotts cheats a bit, too, in solving the mystery by introducing a previously unmentioned personage who admits having killed Lady Heron. It must be confessed that even his most clotted Devonshire cream mood is preferable to this thin and watery tale of blood.

DIRT ROADS. By HOWARD SNYDER. Century. 1927. $2.

For sheer gloom and sustained agony Mr. Snyder's novel beats all competitors in the field of the dismal which we have examined these twelve months past. It is a story of the poverty stricken, debt-burdened tenant farmers of northern Missouri, more particularly that of young Ellic Wingate, his invalid wife Sarah, their two small children, and their heroic hired girl Jennie, a comely, robust widow. Everything under the sun—their own frailties, the weather, livestock, soil, landlord, neighbors—is leagued against these poor people, and it is a sobering experience to observe their struggles. Sarah, unable to withstand the grinding hardships of her existence, is on her last legs when the tale begins, but she needs an unreasonably long time to die, the while masterful Jennie takes the domestic helm. The troubles of Ellic are not ended by Sarah's tardy demise, for the wretched lad has by that time got Jennie into trouble. Jennie's baby enters, the world nameless and untended, but dies soon after, nearly causing Jennie to join Sarah. Then only does Ellic, who is by no means a smart Ellic, awake to the realization that it is time to wed Sarah and with his little flock leave this devil's country.

THE DEFENDERS. By STELLA G. S. PERRY. Stokes. 1927. $2.

This is an out and out romantic tale. It is based, to be sure, on solid historical data (Mrs. Perry's list of sources is impressive and makes the statement that she worked for several years on this novel appear not at all surprising) yet the book so abounds in imaginary characters and events, interwoven with the factual, that in the general turmoil the two become inextricably mingled. The scene is laid in Louisiana and is centered in New Orleans in the stormy years of 1814 and 1815. The Barataria Pirates play a large and interesting part in the development of the novel, and, as is usual in fiction, are more fascinating than the meritorious characters. There are three heroines for good measure—one a pre-flapper flapper,—each with a train of admirers to become entangled in the plots and counterplots that keep the story at concert pitch throughout.

(*Continued on page* 405)

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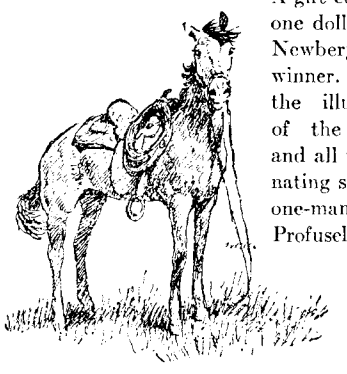

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## Too Many Mirrors

I LIVE IN A CITY. By JAMES S. TIPPETT. New York: Harper & Bros. 1927. 75 cents.

LOOKING OUT OF JIMMIE. By HELEN HARTNESS FLANDERS. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1927.

MAGPIE LANE. By NANCY BYRD TURNER. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1927. $1.60.

Reviewed by MARGARET WIDDEMER

NOTHING should be more reverently approached than the writing of books for little children. Nothing is more casually undertaken. Nine children's books out of ten are done on the principle of a *St. Nicholas* poem of my childhood, concerning a

*. . . writer man*
*Who'd written treatises and themes, till "For a change," he said*
*"I think I'll write a children's book before I go to bed."*

Furthermore, poems are a more serious offense than prose, because with any luck rhyme sticks in the child-mind as prose cannot. Yet people go complacently on doing the kind of child-verse they would have been bored to death with when they were children, unless they were the kind who never could like rhyme at all—a very strange kind of children.

The child mind does not want to see itself in a mirror. The normal little one reacts to magic, adventure, and drollery up to a further point of the monstrous and grotesque than adults can bear. And as a case in point, the day when "Slovenly Peter" was a nursery classic, or even the day when the moral rhymes of Jane and Ann Taylor reigned, was better for the child than the state of affairs since the "Child's Garden of Verse" became the norm. Grotesqueries or moralities, they were at least narratives, not static photographic studies. And they drew the child beyond his little self to a world beyond, of whatever kind.

Today Milne's "When We Were Very Young" has superseded Stevenson as the inspiration of fashionable child-poetry. Now, charming and unique as it is, this book is only the child-mind mirrored exquisitely for the delight and amusement of its elders. It cannot give the child much more than himself. The little more is charm and poetic feeling. And while manner may be imitated, charm and poetic feeling cannot.

Mr. Tippett's "I Live in a City" is advertised by its publishers as "putting romance and glamour into the happenings of every day." Here is the first stanza of the book, a fair sample:

*When I go to the country in the summer*
*I have a house and yard*
*But it's very different*
*In New York City.*

This statement does not seem glamourous to me. It would not when I was aged four to eight, as it is marked on the jacket, have enchanted me any more than it does today. Not being sub-normal, I knew that much, but did not thrill to it. The rest of the book contains equally bald statements of facts about cities. They are in rhyme form, but they possess neither poetry, beauty, charm, strangeness, nor indeed anything which can amuse, illumine, or develop a child's mind. Their only merits are accuracy and simplicity. They might be a literary rendition of short exercises done by a bored child who had been required to do once a day his impression of Apartments, Parks, Telephones, Electricity, and "What I Saw on My Walk Today." . . . Have I been unjust? But no. Here is another at random:

*If the window sticks*
*Call the Superintendent.*
*If the lights play tricks*
*Call the Superintendent . . .*

It is bad enough to keep a child in an apartment. But to make his mental pictures of this stuff is worse. It is dreadful to remember the helpless children who will have this read them by earnest parents.

"Looking Out of Jimmie" has a charming format, closely imitating the Milne book again. But again we find no more than literal, sometimes wordy, transcriptions of the child-mind. There is a certain sweetness of outlook here, though we still lack poetic merit and the sense of magic or adventure—and seek in vain for the story-poem the child prefers. And when Mrs. Flanders forgets for a moment her long painstaking descriptions of Jimmie's presumed feelings about Daddy and Mother and Nurse, and slips into mother-nonsense, it is rather pleasant, as in the quatrain—

*A Toat is very hubbly,*
*With bumps and bunches nubbly*
*And chins and foreheads doubly*
*And chest quite often bubbly.*

Here is the sort of thing to please the child who is trying out the sounds of the English language. There is also a rather nice Milnean rabbit poem. But oh, how much better Nancy Byrd Turner does rabbits! Of course there is a difference in children. Mrs. Turner's children get the magic, the excitement of rabbits, Mrs. Flanders's Jimmie relates very lengthily how Daddy got red hunting them; what the Baker did about them. One doesn't much care.

Nancy Byrd Turner's "Magpie Lane" is the sort of book I could, and shall give to a child without any feeling of having helped to introvert its mind or dwarf its intelligence. The poems are musical, with the ballad-swing children love. They do not force the child against a mirror. They are about exciting things like Dick Whittington, and dogs who steal dolls and aren't ashamed, and resolute cats who won't climb down from trees, and Magpie Lane and Bow Bells and Oxford Town (that magic of unknown names to children!) and cheerful drollery such as a child chuckles over. And they have real beauty; witness "Candle Song:"

*Bend, little flame!*
*Bend like a flower as I blow!*
*Tulip colored and all aglow,*
*Nobody guesses the way you go*
*Nor the way you came.*

There is an authentic thrill for a child's spine in "Bells," in "Old Man Long Ago," in "Going up to London;"

*Riding, riding downward by many a silver ridge*
*And many a slope of amethyst, I'll come to London Bridge,*
*If I met the King himself he'd smile beneath his frown—*
*Who is this comes riding up so light to London Town?*

As good in their very different way; as delightful to children, are such rhymes as the one beginning

*I met four young and handsome kits*
*In black fur coats and velvet mits. . . .*

and the story of

*Fanny from the city had never seen a fowl*
*She didn't know a guinea from a gander or an owl.*

Perhaps the average child of today has not heard much of silver ridges, of Oxford Town and "Bow Bells crying sudden-sweet like angels in the air," of such long and lovely words as "Buccaneer," and "Aslant," and "exquisite." But surely it is only fair that he should be given the chance to know them. Even the most self-centered baby grows tired of staring in the glass.

CHRISTMAS, celebrated in the twentieth century chiefly by the making of gifts"—thus some future account of our mores. And in addition, perhaps, "the weariness of soul characteristic of a material age too often accompanied these gifts." All true—this very Christmas! But when it comes right down to it, how many of us would willingly eliminate the gift-way of celebrating Christmas? There must be some compensation in the giving of gifts, then, for the trouble that it has become to arrange for their giving, something in the very nature of a gift that allures. Perhaps it is that a gift always is a gift for a' that. If it becomes a reward, a bribe, a tribute exacted, then it is no longer a gift. And how many things are there in this curiously overlaid civilization of ours that do keep their integrity?

Furthermore, a gift is not merely a purchase conditioned by utility or necessity—it opens to our choice the whole world of delectable objects amidst which there is usually no reason for us to wander. And the fact that the object of our final selection will not remain with us is compensated for by the success of self-esteem springing from a direct hit on the desires of the second person. It is skill amounting to art that is required to delight not only ourselves but the person to be favored. And here perhaps is the truest reason why the making of gifts keeps its freshness forever. Giving *is* an art, an expression of personality, free except for such conditions as depend on personality. No one can constrain another to give, and we all have it dinned into us that "money cannot determine the worth of a gift." It remains an affair between two people (the second one always along invisibly) who are in secret league for unnecessary and mutual delight. In short, a gift is one of the few real luxuries left in this our modern life, which has so sadly succeeded in making necessities of most luxuries.

Now, to bring the subject quickly within the small walls of our Bookshop, though there are no statistics handy, probably three out of four Christmas presents are given to children. Here surely should be the best of opportunities for the practise of a gentle art, for benevolence is undoubted, sympathy should be strong, and understanding can call experience to its aid, while the subtle-simple nature of the child should make an ideal testing-ground for the intelligence and the intuition of parents or maiden aunts. To come more securely within The Bookshop, out of the three gifts that go to children probably one at least is a book, and what better material for pleasure dependent on personality is there than a book? Put the book and the child happily together, and you have indeed celebrated Christmas at its best.

If only the subject could rest thus joyfully! But, alas! the statistics of bookbuying for children at Christmas have pretty well flooded out the artistic use of opportunity. The hurried mother usually buys before she thinks or even asks. Reliable guides, printed or human, are not often at hand. If only some memory of Hans Andersen or Edward Lear, some thrill at the right kind of picture-book, anything first hand and personal could illuminate the parental mind, or some real understanding of the child in the case supplement lack of book knowledge or experience! If there is no saving glimmer at all of pleasure recalled or anticipated, why, then it would seem that the child might fare better with a tinker-toy than with the rsultant book.

## An Old Friend

DOCTOR DOLITTLE'S GARDEN. By HUGH LOFTING. New York: F. A. Stokes Co. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by DAISY NEUMANN

JUST as Alice was surprised to discover that it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place, so our children might be surprised to find that the people who write books for them in series are usually overworking a good idea. In a former generation, however, juvenile writers appear to have exploited their good idea with such a degree of success that many of that day's classics come down not singly, but in a body. The "Five Little Peppers" series, the long line of "Little Colonel" books, to say nothing of Elsie Dinsmore's incredible diuturnity, and countless other old friends are proof enough that after the close of Volume One its readers are eager to continue and find out what-happened-next.

On this last count, though there is little to distinguish it from the six predecessors, we prophesy a long life to "Doctor Dolittle's Garden." In it the grave Thomas Stubbins has recorded faithfully the "Tales of the Home for Crossbred Dogs," which are very amusing, the transatlantic round-trip of a waterbeetle on the foot of a duck, the fruits of the jolly Doctor's research on the subject of insect-language, and an account of his marvellous journey to the Moon in the company of said Thomas Stubbins, Chee-Chee the monkey, and Polynesia the parrot.

This volume is fanciful and entertaining like the former ones. And yet, because we know his capacity for being even more entertaining, we feel it would be a good thing should Doctor Dolittle encounter on one of his magic adventures the Red Queen. For she might tell him in a friendly sort of way, as she told Alice, that if he wants to get anywhere he must run twice as fast as *that*.

## In the "Other America"

THE TIGER WHO WALKS ALONE. By CONSTANCE LINDSAY SKINNER. Macmillan. 1927. $1.75.

Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

THE setting of "The Tiger Who Walks Alone" would appear to be Venezuela, Columbia, or Ecuador, or possibly, the land of "Montalba," in which its many adventures take place, is a composite of all three.

It was here that sixteen-year-old Dick Wynn came with his uncle, Professor Wynn, who was making a scientific expedition into Montalba's jungles. This meant in itself snakes, crocodiles, poisoned arrows, and various kindred and more or less exciting things, but Dick, as it happened, had met a Spanish-American soldier of fortune, General Mendez, in London, and as Montalba was General Mendez's own country, and he was about to start a revolution there, Dick's possibilities of adventure were plainly increased. Indeed, he soon finds himself in the thick of a South American revolution, and by the side of his dashing and gallant friend, sees it through to its successful end.

(Do crocodiles, by the way, bark, as they lie along the river banks, until you can scarcely hear yourself think? The reviewer didn't know it, and rode on a river steamboat for the better part of a fortnight up the Magdalena River once, past rows of alligators, and never heard a squeak. But maybe they do.)

The Montalba which the American visits is the romantic and slightly theatrical South America which Richard Harding Davis used to write about in "Soldiers of Fortune" and "Captain Macklin." If the Dick Wynns who read Miss Skinner's story were actually to buy a ticket to any of the Caribbean ports and try to find a Montalba, or a revolution like that pictured here, they might be disappointed. Idealistic and quixotic soldiers like General Mendez, trying to make their little countries safe for democracy, are rather scarce in the Caribbean region, where "revolution" is generally merely a name for that show of force or the use of it, with which one political group turns out another political group when it thinks that it is strong enough to do so or that the Ins have been in long enough. They are not very romantic affairs, these revolutions, and as machine-guns and modern rifles become more and more common, they are a good deal more destructive than they used to be, and probably more unpleasant.

If this side of Miss Skinner's story smells a bit of the footlights, on the other hand, she doesn't patronize the South Americans, or look down on them from the heights of the supposedly superior Nordic, but tries to give them their due, and to suggest that they may be no less interesting and likable because they are Latin and different. And that is something to be properly grateful for. The "tiger who walks alone," by the way, isn't a real tiger at all, but just what he is should doubtless be left to the breathless readers of the story.

## For Boys and Girls

ADVENTURES IN READING. By MAY LAMBERTON BECKER. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by REBECCA LOWRIE

THIS is a book for boys and girls. If boys and girls can be persuaded to read a book telling them what they should read, they will find it vastly more than a list of the great books of childhood—and after. Here is no smug catalogue of improving reading prepared by an adult with an eye to accepted classics. Not at all. Mrs. Becker is personal and friendly. She tells you about the books she has liked, and why she had liked them, and how the adventure of reading ties up with the adventure of living.

Not all the books she talks about are "juveniles." And this to my mind, gives her book its greatest value. She doesn't tie an age-limit tag to anything—which indicates how well she knows the younger generation as it approaches adolescence. Her fiction list includes most of the books that none of us can do without. So do the lists of history and biography.

Aside from the chapters on poetry, the drama, travel, nature, science, and adventure there is an admirable chapter on the Romance of Words and one "Not to be read unless you are determined to be an author."

"Adventures in Reading" is a book for boys and girls.

And it's a lucky parent into whose hand it falls!

*For continuation of Children's Bookshop see page 404.*

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# The Children's Bookshop

(*Continued from page* 402)

## Stories for Boys

THE YEAR'S BEST STORIES FOR BOYS. Edited by RALPH BARBOUR. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1927.

AMERICAN BOY SEA STORIES. Edited by GRIFFITH OGDEN ELLIS. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1927. $2.

THE BOY SCOUTS' YEAR BOOK. Edited by FRANKLIN K. MATHIEWS. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1927.

Reviewed by DANIEL HENDERSON

IF my boyhood were just beginning; if instead of Deadwood Dick, Nick Carter, Frank Merriwell, and old Sleuth, I had to go for thrills to the heroes presented by *The American Boy, Youth's Companion, Boy's Life,* or *The Open Road,* and other juvenile magazines, would boyhood lose its savour?

It surprises me that my answer is NO. Judging by the thrills that have come to me as I read these three anthologies of stories for boys, I should have been quite content decades ago to have my juvenile mind fed on such yarns. And what worries my parents and teachers would have been spared!

In Ralph Henry Barbour's anthology, "The Year's Best Stories for Boys," composed of seventeen short stories selected from the pages of boys' magazines, the only ghost of the juvenile "literature" of the past is that of the athletic Frank Merriwell. *Sports is the predominating note:* the heroes, instead of the colorful gamblers, two-gun men, or unerring detectives, are school boys, aviation recruits, or naval apprentices, who face natural situations and triumph. Unsuspected by the contributors, however, an adult hero does loom up in these stories, an inspiring, dominating personality who is always in the background—"Coach."

Undoubtedly the thrills are here. New provinces have opened up for the writer of stories for youth. There is breath-taking excitement in Raoul Fauconnier Whitfield's story, "Silver Wings," a story of two young fliers who learned self-control in an uncontrollable plane. There is an interesting nature picture as well as stirring adventure in Kenneth Gilbert's "Koyo, the Singer." There is a suggestion of Rex Lardner but yet a bully, original story in "You Know What a Boob I Am, Uncle," by Earl Reed Silvers. There is humor of another sort—as well as a true sea picture—in "The Heirs of the Fore and Aft," by Charles Tenney Jackson.

Mr. Barbour, an outstanding favorite as a writer for boys, is the ideal editor for a book of this kind. He has performed what was once impossible—assembled stories that parents will approve and that boys will like. It is cheering to know that this anthology has become an annual custom.

"American Boy Sea Stories," selected from a favorite magazine, *The American Boy,* is introduced by the editor, Griffith Ogden Ellis, with the statement that "this book of sea stories exemplifies the new standard of excellence that prevails in boys' fiction of today." The stories, he says, were chosen with the aim that "the boy should have just as good fiction—as gripping and convincing action, as truthful a portrayal of character and as authentic atmosphere—as his older brother or his father."

The reviewer finds this ambition fulfilled. Conrad or Robertson or Melville could nod approvingly over several of these tales of life aboard ocean-spanning planes, whalers, fishing boats, eagle-boats and battleships. Warren Hastings Miller, who is honored by the inclusion of two tales of modern navy life, knows how to mix technique with romance in the best Kipling manner. There is no air of the imitator about him, however; his plots and technique are his own. Other stories especially appealing to your critic are those by Eugene Cunningham, Laurie Y. Erskine, Kenneth Gilbert, Arthur Mason, Philip Kirby, Kenneth Payson Kempton, C. D. Stewart, and Albert W. Tolman.

It is interesting to contrast with the work of these writers of limited renown that of Captain Dingle and John Fleming Wilson, who are contributors. Good as are the stories of this seasoned pair, they do not rise in merit or interest above several other stories in the volume, as, for instance, "The Target of Storms," by C. D. Stewart. Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell in "The Wreck of the Mail Steamer" contributes a quiet but revealing narrative of life along the Labrador coast.

James E. West, Chief Scout Executive, who isn't aware that "good wine needs no bush" becomes, in his foreword, a too-ardent advocate for "The Boy Scouts' Year Book," edited by Franklin K. Mathiews. It is a big, rather clumsy volume that in spite of such shortcomings as may appear to an adult has year after year entrenched itself in the hearts of boys. This new volume will strengthen its appeal. It differs from the two anthologies we have mentioned in that, along with fiction, go articles about sports and outdoor life by leading coaches and players—among them, Fielding H. Yost, Burleigh Grimes, Dan Beard, and Elon Jessup.

On the fiction side, it gives one a thrill to find that the Year Book includes a gently humorous story by Kipling which shows how sympathetically the author of "Stalky and Co." has studied the Boy Scout movement.

While the Year Book includes stories of outstanding merit by Ralph Henry Barbour, Earl Reed Silvers and others, its fiction throughout is not on the high plane of the other two volumes. The editor's endeavors to be all-inclusive, with verses, jokes, etc., beside the stories and articles, give the book the appearance of a magnified magazine. In illustrations, however, the book excels its rivals. There are striking pictures by Charles Livingston Bull, Bert N. Salg, Sidney Reisenberg, Tony Sarg, and other illustrators of note.

Don't ask me which of these three volumes to choose. The youngster who has been reading them with me demands them all.

## Cowboy Life

JINGLEBOB. By PHILIP ASHTON ROLLINS. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by BERNARD DEVOTO

IN July, 1883, there were no movies and over the purple barrens of the West still wandered a race of genuine cowboys, a race which the movies were thereafter to malign most horribly. Bill King, fourteen years old, and his less important older brother, who was called "The Duke," chose that month to come to Pine Bluff, Wyoming, for a visit to their uncle's ranch, whose brand was the Tumbling K. They were hurried at once into the most glamorous of cowboy activities, a drive. Three thousand cows—and they were longhorns—had to be driven across Wyoming into Montana. Bill King had come from Philadelphia to learn all that he could about cowboy life, and the long drive was well calculated to give him every detail of it. He had a tenderfoot's skill in causing trouble, and sometimes danger, but before the summer was out he had ceased to be a "pilgrim" and was accepted by the outfit.

No wonder! For not more than a half-hour after he joined up, he saw Jinglebob, rightful segundo of the ranch, kill a rattlesnake by snapping it like a whip—and from that moment, lively incidents piled up in clusters along the trail. He listened to the tales devised for pilgrims. He saw a round-up and a stampede. He rode with Jinglebob when the segundo was reading sign. He saw all types of ranchers and cowboys. He saw at least one rustler and one horse-thief, and one bit of gun-play happened under his very eyes. Most of all, he crammed his mind with the lore and craft of this skilled trade: the etiquette of the trail, the training and management of horses, the routine of branding and riding herd, the mysterious psychology of cattle, the thousand-odd capabilities that a ranch must have in order to do his work. And he learned a great deal about the quiet, humorous individualism of the West—so much the creation of the cowboy and so soon obliterated after his passing.

Now all this made a glorious vacation for Bill King, and it makes fine reading today, when it is no longer possible for any boy, except on that carefully machined counterfeit, the dude ranch, with its parody of cowboy life. The story of the northward drive, and the winter that comes after it, when Jinglebob dies protecting Bill, is well told, because unpretentiously told. The herd drifts northward with that ominous nonchalance of herds, the madness of the stampede ready to break out at a spark. The outfit rides with it, and in and out drift the casual strangers who give the book its persuasiveness. Furthermore, the really encyclopædic amount of information it conveys is authentic. Mr. Rollins knew the cowboy at first hand, in the days of his glamour, and has too great a respect for him to falsify the smallest detail of his life. His aim, in "Jinglebob," is to describe the courage, adventurousness, and romance of that life as it really was, far more interesting in its routine than the movies have ever made it in their distortions. He writes primarily for boys, as in "The Cowboy" he wrote for adults, but he does not dilute or sweeten his story, nor wrench it into parable. Didactic the book is, in fact it communicates much knowledge, but its leisurely, loosely spun narrative never flags. It is an excellent book for anyone to read, and its corrective value is potentially enormous.

Illustration by Esther Peck for "The Playbook of Robert Hood," by Susan Meriwether (Harpers). *See page* 409.

## Informative Books

By MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

I AM asked to suggest a few "outlines" and books of general informative value, such as would be attractive to younger readers and be welcomed in a family library. It would, of course, be quite possible to assemble such a list without going into a children's bookshop at all. Almost any grown-up book will attract a young reader, if it has plenty of pictures explained in the text: the edition of Wells's "Outline," for instance, with the vast number of photographs large and small, scattered through its pages, will in time get itself read by the whole family. There is a time of life when one collects and hoards facts as one collected the buttons of an earlier day, in much the same spirit and as undiscriminatingly as a button-string is assembled. At this intensely realistic period, when if parents but realized it, even stories are read mainly for their fact-value and anything is treasured that is believed to be true, a special responsibility rests upon those who supply the young reader with facts, and books that will give him a notion of continuity and development in their arrangement have a value greater than he sometimes realizes.

Such books are being produced for him often enough to give him—or those interested in his reading—a considerable range of choice. V. M. Hillyer's "Child's History of the World" (Century), is waiting almost as soon as he can read fluently—supposing, of course, that he reads at the age now considered suitable for taking up this pastime. The Reader's Guide has been lately receiving, and printing as rapidly as space will permit, advice on books for children about what we there are somewhat loosely calling archæology, a term that brings in social history and much other general information. All the authorities contributing praise Jennie Hall's "Buried Cities" (Macmillan)—and what is even more to the purpose, it is praised by all the children that they represent. They agree, too, in lauding the excellence of the illustrations in the works of the Quennells, especially "A History of Everyday Things in Europe" (Scribner), a book that gives young readers something the same sort of delight that older ones could get from Traill's "Social England."

In selecting books on science, I would by all means consult a high authority and choose freely on his advice. This is why the books advised on science and invention in my "Adventures in Reading" were selected from a list of one hundred and fifty given me by Dr. Slosson, author of "Creative Chemistry." If some of these books seem too advanced for young people in high school, let the mother, with one eye upon her young son's radio set, reflect that the small boy of today not only knows more about science than his grandfather did at his age, but in all probability more than his father does now.

As for outlines of literature, the latest to appear is also one of the very best: "The Winged Horse," by Joseph Auslander (Doubleday, Page), is an ageless book, rich in inspiration for any time of life. It is a history of the part poetry has played in the world's life, told through the lives of some of its poets; the style is graceful but not condescending, and the quotations are such as "taste like more." And, to round off this brief list, that mathematics may be made fascinating to an age that usually suffers rather than rejoices when its name is mentioned, may be proved by the popularity of "Number Stories of Long Ago" (Ginn), the gift of David Eugene Smith not only to our boys and girls but to coming generations of young readers.

## Nature Tales

THE OUT-OF-DOORS CLUB. By SAMUEL SCOVILLE, JR. Harpers. 1927. $1.50.

"FATHER'S a great birdler," said Alice-Palace, one of the band of five children and a father and mother who first lived out these charming chapters, printed casually almost a decade ago and now republished in proper book-form by Harpers. Being a "birdler" apparently means being a naturalist in general—the family expeditions vary widely in objective. They and the book accordingly are run on the principle of the prize-package—and what better one is there for a good time? "They stepped beyond the tree. . . . There, all rose-red and snow-white, with parted lips, waited for them the loveliest flower of their lives, that great orchid, the pink-and-white lady's slipper." Always something special is waiting for them at the end, as well as many minor things on the trail. Mr. Scoville's quick observation, lucid, vivid description, and very evident personal zest all combine to make this a charming, if slight, book.

## Indian Tales

ANIMAL STORIES THE INDIANS TOLD. By ELIZABETH BISHOP JOHNSON. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1927. $2.

INDIAN NIGHTS. By G. WALDO BROWNE. Noble & Noble. 1927. 85 cents.

Reviewed by MARY HUNTER

INDIAN myths and legends for children or grown-ups are of two types—they stand on their own feet and walk their own characteristic gait, or they stumble over the idiosyncrasies of the interpreter. Among recent additions to the slim library of Indian myths retold for children, "Animal Stories the Indians Told," by Elizabeth Johnson, belongs to the first type, and "Indian Nights," by G. W. Browne, to the second.

"Animal Stories the Indians Told" is a small volume of attractive format. The stories range from the Guianas to Alaska and are fully illustrated with small but lively photographs of animals mentioned. Miss Johnson has hardly more than acted the part of a judicious collector. She has taken her material from excellent anthropological sources leaving them practically untouched so that the stories are simple and accurate, but unliterary. However, their direct brevity is a point in their favor with a youthful audience. The book as a whole is excellent material for reading or retelling to children from four to eight.

"Indian Nights," by G. W. Browne, walks in the time-honored tradition of Longfellow and Cooper in which damsels are all fair princesses (a rare creature among Indians) and oak trees sigh and are lonely. The stories cannot be approached directly but must be doctored and flavored for home consumption. The book is cast in the old Arabian Nights framework with the avowed purpose of holding them as a unit. This device is so foreign to the Indian method of story telling that all the tales become distorted and occasionally ridiculous, and the alien recasting allows such incidents as men casting themselves in an agony of despair at the feet of their beloved and the exchanging of kisses. The basic material of the stories, mostly gathered from northeastern tribes, is good. But it is in a field so stamped with the mannerisms of Longfellow that no one seems able to free himself and do the legends justice.

## A Suggestion

For those of us who are appalled at the power Christmas has of fanning youthful egotism into flames of desire, "family presents," something from all to all, might be suggested. The practical reward of this composite generosity would be that the family would acquire objects of desire beyond the individual pocketbook. Of course, a radio would come first, but it is more than probable that "The Outline of Science," or "Wonders of the Ancient World" might likewise succeed in pleasing all tastes and ages. There is nothing more cheerfully adaptable than our humble friends, the books!

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# The New Books

## Fiction

(*Continued from page* 400)

ARROGANT BEGGAR. By ANZIA YEZIERSKA. Doubleday, Page. 1927. $2.50.

Anzia Yezierska has certainly not lacked appreciation. Professor William Lyons Phelps, who cannot stomach Gorky's lack of realism, finds Miss Yezierska's "sincerity" and "fidelity to actual life" above reproach. Dr. Frank Crane thinks that her work is "very true to life" and "ought to be a source of much courage to those who are struggling with untoward circumstances." Jim Tully has said, or is said to have said, that she writes "in the only language worth understanding—that of the emotions." And Dr. Clifford Smythe has compared her with Shakespeare and Cervantes.

One who is not so fortunate as these writers in being sure of just what constitutes "actual life"—and who is not even sure that the language of the emotions is the only language worth understanding—may be pardoned if he fails to share this adulation of Miss Yezierska. Certainly in her latest novel, "Arrogant Beggar," her Shakespearian and Cervantesque qualities are temporarily in abeyance. The plot is trite, the characterization is thin, and the thought is an elaboration of the obvious. The plot: poor working-girl received into charitable institution nobly spurns its charity and makes her own living, thereby being enabled to marry a genius and establish a happy home. The characterization: one vivid Russian Jewish working-girl (evidently Miss Yezierska herself momentarily disguised), one poor old woman oozing kindness, one diaphanous genius, and several suits of clothes passing as donors of charity. The thought: there is a gulf between the rich and the poor which is difficult to bridge, but members of each class—especially the poor—may be happy if they will only be brave and kind.

Miss Yezierska's hostility to organized charity is as deep as was that of Dickens but it is less courageously presented. Where Dickens, trusting to his hatred, made no attempt to be fair but painted his full-blooded monstrositites with reckless gusto, Miss Yezierska for once tries to hold her emotions in check and to write with even-handed justice: but the result is still satire, however much it masquerades as realism. Before the end a perverse sympathy seizes the reader for the waxen Lady Bountiful and Prince Charming who strive so hard and so fatuously to do right—and who strive still harder and more fatuously to come to life as characters. The faint pathos of a marionette show hovers about the volume.

But surely never was a poor story better told. Miss Yezierska's style goes at lightning speed; the reader is whirled onward from sentence to sentence at a rate that for sheer thrill of movement hardly has its equal. The experience is more exhilarating than the best automobile race or football game. In the fewest of words Miss Yezierska can conjure up the scene or situation that she desires. Both scene and situation are usually of the most familiar, but like an old room newly decorated they gleam beneath their author's furnishings. What could be more trite, for example, than the substance of this description of a moist hand,—but what more deadly than the assonances with which Miss Yezierska drives home her physical disgust? "The damp skin clinging to my fingers felt like a limp fish wriggling against my palm." Old wine in new bottles; old thoughts in a new style; triteness made palatable; plus a Russian warmth and gush of emotion new in American literature;—what is Anzia Yezierska. She is not Shakespeare nor yet Cervantes, but she is pleasant to listen to, even when, as in the present volume, she has nothing particular to say.

THE SPREADING STAIN. By CHARLES J. FINGER. Doubleday, Page. 1927. $2.

This is the story of Joe Graham, Occasional Office Boy for the B. R. and Z. railroad. Joe wants to write, and he hits upon the idea of setting down quite simply the events of his everyday life. He shares his ambition with his chum, Cecil Mahan, who "only lacks imagination to be a Defoe." The story which follows is a straightforward account of the discovery of a scientific weed-killer of such terrific power that it escapes from the control of its inventor, and spreads over the earth's surface, leaving in its wake destruction, famine, and death. The description of a world laid waste by a chemical force is so vivid and dramatic that such an event seems more than possible.

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# The New Books

## Fiction

(*Continued from page* 400)

MARGHERITA. By LEON KELLEY. Putnams. 1927. $2.

**There is the raw material of poignancy in this story, but Mr. Kelley's smelter does not quite succeed in extracting the precious metal from the ore. Margherita Strethers, born of a Yankee financier and a Florentine coloratura, cursed with money and irreconcilable hereditary inclinations, all her life wanted affection and didn't know how to go about getting it, till thanks to the overriding of the New Englander by the Florentine, she succeeded late and imperfectly. All this might have been tolerably interesting, but Mr. Kelley has not managed to make it so; especially since he chose to tell the story through the familiar medium of the old friend who explains in spirals what ought to have been told in a straight line.**

MOONLADY. By UPTON CLOSE, (JOSEF K. HALL). Putnam. 1927. $2.

The present reviewer confesses to having approached Mr. Hall's latest volume with a strong favorable prejudice. This favorable predisposition was strengthened by the dedication, which is "to those who believe that a novel should have a plot, and are of the idea that Chinese stories should tell as much about Chinese people as about Westerners against a Chinese background." But the novel is quite disappointing. While there is no question that "Moonlady" has a plot, and that this plot is well sustained, as plots in novels about China go, it does not seem that the story really fulfils the promise of the dedication, to give the reader an idea of the Chinese people. Actually, "Moonlady" has an extremely conventional triangular plot. The hero, as morally insignificant as Weislingen, fluctuates between the beautiful and haughty British girl and Moonlady, the young Chinese maiden who is represented as the brains of the revolutionary movement. Although young Weston, the hero, has mildly compromised himself with Moonlady, he falls into the arms of the British heroine in the end. It seems almost impossible to believe that any well brought up Chinese girl would so violate the canons of Chinese propriety as Moonlady did in her various interviews with Weston. If she had been represented as a "problematic" nature, hovering between modesty and lecherousness, her course of action would be understandable. As it is, her attitude toward Weston seems only to be based upon a desire for sensationalism in the story. The effort to present Weston as a fascinating charmer is entirely unsustained, and in the end, the three main characters pale out into insignificance.

Langdon, the British adviser to the Chinese President's office, and the father of the heroine, is portrayed as a thorough crook. How Weston, in the face of Langdon's treatment of him, could have gone out of his way to rescue him as he did, is a mystery which no amount of analysis of the story will solve. The book suffers, as all novels written about Chinese suffer, from an inexpressible amateurishness in psychological delineation, though on the whole, the Chinese atmosphere is well maintained. Mr. Hall undoubtedly knows the Chinese far better than the average person who writes about that country. Some of the descriptions are individual and true to life, though the actually tense dramatic moments of the Students' Revolt have not been caught as they affected those foreigners who passed through them in their various critical stages in 1914 and 1920. The book also suffers from too great an effort to maintain the atmosphere of realism by literal renderings from the Chinese. Some of these renderings are inexcusable. For example, to translate "lao nai-nai" as "ancient breasts" neither gives the characteristic Chinese atmosphere, nor even the actual meaning of the word, which is "amah."

HALF-PRICE. By CONSTANCE TRAVERS SWEETMAN. Morrow. 1927. $2.

This new work by a Canadian lacks the body and the sustained good writing of the present Canadian "Jalna," and the success, recurring power of that other Canadian novel, "Settlers of the Marsh." It begins with a *Saturday Evening Post* flavor, loses that quality, gains other qualities, moves swiftly into a sincere and competent manner, and ends by dropping, as it were, a bundle of squirming life on the reader's doorstep. The author has kept her pen pretty well to one challenging and worthwhile job—that of building up a single situation and involving in that situation a group of interesting characters. She has caught the trick of objectivity. The reader looks on. At the end of the book he is left, as it were, still at gaze.

Fundamentally old fashioned, outstandingly moral, "Half-Price" will be considered a wholly scandalous performance in many Canadian circles, and at least "modern" in Mr. Mencken's moral Middle West. It is written brightly, even gaily. It might seem on the surface but smart summer porch stuff. But there is here and there solid walnut beneath the paint and varnish. The style, as one reads on, reveals itself as economical, effective,—at times, in the building up of situation, even powerful.

## History

A HISTORY OF EUROPE AND THE MODERN WORLD, 1492-1914. By R. B. MOWAT. Oxford University Press. 1927. $1.50.

A few more books like this one will remove the stigma which attaches to textbooks. Full of solid facts it is, but arrayed with such a fine sense of proportion and selected with such a keen judgment of their significance, that it is actually a pleasant book for the casual reader to browse through. How all this wealth of information was ever compressed within so small a space must remain a marvel.

In a sense, this is "the new history," but not that strange mixture of vague psychological outpourings and irrelevant opinion which is sometimes given that name. Common sense dominates the book. The choice of illustrations, which, the author tells us, was made by Mr. John Johnson, Printer to Oxford University, is one of the best features of the book. It was a stroke of genius to interlard a textbook liberally not only with the conventional illustrations, but with reproductions of old prints, title-pages of epoch-making books, famous cartoons, and even postage-stamps. The good taste shown in their selection is unerring. The sketch-maps, clearly drawn, are very good.

Following in the footsteps of Professor Abbott of Harvard, whose leadership he acknowledges, Mr. Mowat has refused to be bound either by the boundaries of Europe or of pure politics. European history in modern times has become world history, and the understanding of a period necessitates a knowledge not only of its politics, but of its social life, literature, and art. The sense of perspective which the author has displayed is admirable. In view of these considerations, one can forgive the unfortunate statement on the first page, that "Vasco da Gama sailed to the coasts of Madras."

JEFFERSON AND THE EMBARGO. By LOUIS MARTIN SEARS. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press. 1927. $4.

Professor Sears sees in the embargo "the practical culmination of Jeffersonian pacifism." The pacifism of Jefferson, however much it may have harmonized with his natural temper, was grounded as well in a study of international law as formulated by jurists before the time of Napoleon, and in an acceptance of the eighteenth century political philosophy which assumed the existence of an original "state of nature" in which peace, rather than war, was the normal characteristic of the social order. In urging the embargo, accordingly, Jefferson "was pursuing not a hasty opportunism," forced upon him by the obvious impracticability of fighting both England and France at the same time, "but rather the logic of his entire philosophy of life." The embargo was to him a substitute for war in general, not a device for avoiding a disastrous war in particular, entering into his developing theory of peaceful international relations as did his championship of the rights of neutrals, his rejection of accepted ideas of contraband, and his insistence that free ships make free goods.

The administration of the embargo, however, was another matter. Once the substitute for war had been set up, Jefferson found himself in the position of "a humanitarian autocrat administering a panacea for the woes of mankind." One of the most consummate of American politicians, skilled in moulding public opinion, "was asking his countrymen to play a passive rôle," to adopt a policy of endurance in place of the aggressive courses which emotional patriotism expects. Yet his success, as Professor Sears reads the record, was greater than has commonly been represented. Pacifist theories did not stand in the way of some energetic assertions of administrative authority, as when the navy was called upon to assist the Treasury Department in upholding the law, a distinct impetus was given to American manufactures in spite of the injury suffered by American commerce, and increasing distress in English industry


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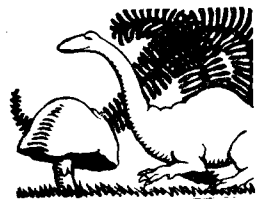

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and trade testified that the embargo, although primarily a weapon of defense, was not without an offensive edge.

It is not often that a historical monograph, devoted to an intensive study of a restricted episode, is so warmly to be praised as this one is for both matter and manner. Professor Sears modestly disclaims any credit for great discoveries, but he has nevertheless set the embargo policy in a new perspective, and in so doing has done much to correct the notion, particularly dwelt upon by historians with Federalist leanings, that Jefferson threw his political theories to the winds when confronted with a national crisis. Bend he did, as every political leader must, to the practical necessities of the case, but it seems clear that he not only clung to the hope of finding in the embargo something that would successfully fend off war, but that he also carried with him a greater measure of popular support than was, on the whole, to have been expected. Beyond the interest of this fresh view of Jefferson's character is the interest of an exceptionally agreeable style, gracing a book whose title holds no allurement with a praiseworthy literary form.

TWENTIETH CENTURY EUROPE. By PRESTON WILLIAM SLOSSON. Houghton Mifflin. 1927. $6.

Professor Slosson, of the University of Michigan, in this volume of over 700 pages, has made an historical survey of the first quarter of the twentieth century in Europe. The book is particularly interesting in comparison with what Mark Sullivan is doing for the United States during the same period. It is the procedure of the historian as opposed to that of the journalist, and there will be advocates for both methods of presentation.

There are three divisions to the book, as might be expected. The first deals with Europe before the war; the second takes up the war period; and the third discusses the new Europe. At the beginning there is a brief outline of the evolution of European civilization, followed by a description of the various countries of Europe as they were prior to 1914. Of necessity, the author includes some extra-European discussion. For example, the mention of Great Britain inevitably entails the inclusion of the British Empire. There are also separate chapters on Europe in the Tropics, in the Far East, and in the Near East.

Virtually 200 pages are devoted to the Great War. Little attention is paid to military events, beyond a summary of campaigns and results. Much more space relatively is given to the methods of modern warfare—the supercannon, poison gas, tanks, and the new supremacy of the air. There is also included the story of how the total resources of the nations were mobilized for the struggle, the rise of war socialism, and the importance placed on engineers, chemists, and other experts. A special chapter is devoted to America and the events which led up to American intervention. Here again the major emphasis is placed upon the organization of warfare rather than upon the actual military events. There is a description of how the United States formed its army, supplied Europe with munitions, financed its war measures, and administered the country on a war footing.

The last section of the book takes up the work of the League of Nations, the progress to date of the Russian Revolution and the organization of the Soviet Republics, the liberated nations of Eastern Europe, the German Republic, and the events of the past few years in Ireland, Morocco, Syria, and Italy. It includes also a description of the inter-allied debt settlements.

Such a work as this will need frequent extension if it is to remain of value, since its merit lies mainly in its comprehensive character. It is in reality an all-around description of twentieth century Europe—politically, intellectually, and socially. There is also a special chapter on twentieth century science and invention contributed by the author's father, the well-known Dr. Edwin E. Slosson. A judicious selection of titles from the mass of available literature on modern Europe has been included at the back of the volume for those who wish to read further.

As a complete and impartial synthesis of information regarding Europe in the twentieth century, the book is highly successful. It has not, perhaps, the glittering character of the work which has theories and predictions to present. It is more like a hand-book of facts, skilfully joined together to form a readable narrative. Such conclusions as are presented have been included only when endorsed by competent authority. There is evidence throughout of much thought and of much careful sifting and arranging of the great mass of material. It is to be hoped the author will find occasion to present future editions of what promises to be a highly valuable work for reference as well as general reading.

## International

THE PATHWAY OF PEACE. An Interpretation of Some British-American Crises. By ROBERT MCELROY. Macmillan. 1927.

This book is not what one expects from its title; but it is about what one would expect an American Professor of American History at Oxford to produce for delivery as lectures to a British audience. It is not, as one might suppose, a book dealing with the means of preventing war and producing peace but—as the subtitle reveals—a survey of British-American diplomatic relations, effectively set against a general European background.

Professor McElroy holds the Harmsworth professorship of American History and his lectures were delivered on the Watson Foundation for American History, Literature, and Institutions. Such being the case, what does one expect? Erudition—and it is here. Accuracy of fact and reasonable deduction—there is much of both. But one also expects the usual platitudes about the dreadfulness of war, the extreme desirability of peace, and the inconceivability of a British-American War—and unfortunately in this, too, one is not deceived.

After a somewhat desultory chapter on that vaguest of abstractions, "The International Mind," Professor McElroy sums up the permanent conditions, favorable and unfavorable, which he believes affect all Anglo-American relations—the distrust kindled long ago by propaganda during the Revolution and perpetuated in American text-books; American racial complexity; the smug belief that America is never imperialistic; Senatorial control of treaties; and the resemblances in outlook due to a certain community of language, literature, and tradition—which last, we regret to say, Professor McElroy allows himself to call by the resounding title, "The Glory of a Common

(*Continued on next page*)


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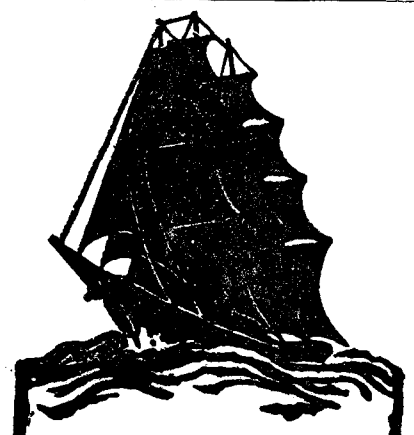

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## The New Books

### International

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Vision." For this may Heaven forgive him.

The remainder of "The Pathway of Peace" is a summary of the crises that have occurred since the great crisis which produced the American Republic, in which Professor McElroy exhibits remarkable skill in sketching a background of European history with a praiseworthy economy of detail. It is, however, hard—remembering our war-time troubles with the hyphenates—to see why any one should write that "Americans of whatever blood, seeing America in danger, respond, regardless of race, creed, or country,"—which is a wish fulfilment if there ever was one! Equally futile is his reference to "the note of faith in international altruism which characterizes America today"—a faith which we display by keeping ostentatiously out of the League and loading our adhesion to the World Court with reservations enough to sink it!

THE COLONIZATION OF NEW ZEALAND. By J. S. MARAIS. London: Humphrey Milford. 1927. $5.

Social experiments of various kinds have been tried in New Zealand from the earliest days of British settlement until the present, and their results are worth careful study now when it is claimed that many of them have failed. It is alleged that compulsory arbitration and the fixing of wages by courts have not proved to be the expected panaceas for the disputes between labor and capital, but are making the country so unattractive to investors as to make it difficult to develop its natural resources, and hence diminish opportunities for employment. The scope of this book does not cover recent times, but the errors made in the early part of the last century are partly responsible for the problems of today.

The British Empire is said to have grown through a series of "fits of absence of mind" on the part of the authorities at London, and it is made quite evident that it was only with the greatest reluctance that the British Cabinet proceeded to annex the Island in 1840 under pressure from the New Zealand Association and the missionaries.

The theories of E. G. Wakefield for the disposal of unoccupied land dominated the early years of the Colony and the effects have valuable lessons. The well-meant and altruistic efforts of the missionaries brought disaster to the native Maories because the social and sanitary conditions were not understood. Various plans for the control of the warlike aborigines failed until the present system was adopted, which is said to be almost the only successful solution of the mixture of white and colored races on the same territory. Maories sit in the New Zealand Legislature and in the Cabinet.

The author has produced a really readable narrative, which is quite an achievement, as it was preceded by much efficient research. The quotations are inserted in such a manner as to carry conviction, while not interfering with the story, and the references and bibliography will be found most useful, though this book is so comprehensive as to be quite adequate even for those who wish to become familiar with the early history of a colony which is said to be more British than Great Britain.

THE MEXICAN QUESTION. By *William English Walling*. Robins Press, 112 Fourth Ave., N. Y.

STAND TO YOUR WORK. By *W. Eric Harris*. Toronto: Musson. $2.

THE LEGACY OF WAR: PEACE. By *Boris A. Bakhmeteff*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.

THE WHITE MAN'S DILEMMA. By *Nathaniel Peffer*. Day. $2.50.

CHECKMATE. By *F. A. C. Forbes-Leith*. McBride. $3.50 net.

THE WORLD TALKS IT OVER. By *Burr Price*. Henkle. $1.75.

ITALY TODAY. By *Sir Frank Fox*. Dodd, Mead. $4.

THE INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTS. By *Cleona Lewis*. Macmillan. $2.

AMERICAN POLICY IN NICARAGUA. By *Henry L. Stimson*. Scribners. $1.25.

THE CATASTROPHE. By *Alexander F. Kerensky*. Appleton. $3.

THE NEW PERSIA. By *Vincent Sheean*.. Century. $2.50.

STANDING ROOM ONLY? By *Edward Alsworth Ross*. Century. $3.

### Juvenile

*See Children's Bookshop, pages* 402 *and* 404

ANT HILLS AND SOAP BUBBLES. By MARY GEISLER PHILLIPS. Philadelphia: Macrae Smith. 1927.

What more charming way to acquaint young children with the ways of insects than to transform the children by magic and let them view the insects from their lowly position and pry into all the secrets of the ant hills and watch all the marvelous processes involved in their daily life!

Mrs. Phillips, whose husband is a professor of apiculture at Cornell, has apparently got her facts with scientific accuracy so that there is no undue humanizing of the ants. Indeed, the charm of the book lies partly at least in the success with which she has "insectized" the children. She takes the magically transformed children to the ants and lets them follow the ants as they travel about and communicate with each other. They explore the underground passages of the ants and experience the excitement of a flood from an upturned washtub; they are at hand to see the young hatch and to follow the nurses about as they take care of the larvæ; they witness the "milking" of the aphids by the ants, and the swarming and mating and battling with strange colonies. Indeed, they miss scarcely any of the interesting events of the ants' life.

No child will think of leaving the magic adventures in the world unfinished and few grown ups will fail to be entranced by this fanciful flight of children and with the marvelous behavior of the ants.

ALL ABOUT ANIMALS. From A to Z. By LILIAN GASK. Crowell. 1927. $3.

A pleasant and informing book, illustrated by excellent photographs of living animals. It is alphabetical, and under *Ounce* or *Elephant* or *Cat* or *Beaver* is enough for a child of description, habitats, and habits, and an anecdote or two drawn from good sources. It is a vast improvement on the old omnibus natural histories, or the modern collections of myths. The book is an annotated zoo.

THE MOON'S BIRTHDAY. By DOROTHY ROWE. Macmillan. 1927. $2.

These stories of Chinese children tell of the customs and religion of the country. The illustrations, by two Chinese artists, give an effect of color delicately laid on rice paper.

DAVID GOES TO BAFFIN LAND. By DAVID BINNEY PUTNAM. Putnams. 1927. $1.75.

This is one of the best of the Putnams Books-by-Boys series. We are already acquainted with David's northern voyaging and his boyish accounts of it, and when he begins (referring to a previous trip) "We were wrecked and practically everything else happened to us in the way of excitement," we are caught at once into the spirit of this new adventure and are ready to embark with a real boy's point of view. We appreciate David's own development, too, for "of course this year things aren't quite as new and unusual as they were then, but on the other hand I know more what it is all about and I guess it really is more fun." And further on in the book a dash of boyish philosophy suggestively rounds off the account of the most difficult section of the journey: "It really turned out to be a pretty rough, hard trip, but lots of fun at that. Anyway, if you're interested in exploring you might as well get used to it, because all trips can't be easy."

In this book David maintains a high standard of simple, straightforward, interesting writing, not only about day-to-day happenings but in the information which he supplies as to geography, early settlements, or previous expeditions. The photographs are remarkable and generously supplied throughout the book. In addition there are simple but decorative sketches at the beginning and end of each chapter and we are interested to read that they were supplied by another young worker—fourteen-year-old Albert Shaffenberg. Besides the main trip of the schooner to Labrador, the Hudson Strait, and Western Baffin Island, there is a supplementary exploration trip of 500 miles in an open whale-boat, which will make many a boy read absorbedly from page to page. The pictures and the accounts of a Labrador canyon and lake rank near the top in interest and suggestiveness, though perhaps a younger reviewer would prefer the encounters with polar bears, Eskimos, and the rare blue geese. As David says, "it was loads of fun"—and full of toughening hardship, too. A great many boys will be glad to own this book.

DRAKE'S QUEST. By CAMERON ROGERS. Doubleday, Page. 1927. $2.50.

This book maintains a precarious balance upon the two stools of juvenile romance and the kind of biographical fiction with which the so-called adult population is currently glutting itself. That it does not entirely fall between them is due to the author's dexterity in pushing it onto one when it shows signs of slipping off the other. The conception of Drake himself is the conventional one of a doughty, single-minded buccaneer whose failures may be attributed to other people's ineptitude; Howard Pyle might have drawn him so. But Mr. Rogers's retelling of the old story embraces both the use of rather longer words than the fifteen-year-old is usually familiar with and the admission that sailor-men on shore are prone to seek rum and women. The narrative is well and racily constructed, its principal blemishes being a not too close regard for historical accuracy in minor points and the employment of the tiresome pseudo-antique in the imaginary conversations of the characters. No one can employ this latter device at length with Elizabethan English without falling into appalling incongruities.

AMONG THE ALPS WITH BRADFORD. By BRADFORD WASHBURN. Putnams. 1927.

Here is a slightly older boy (sixteen) to stand grinning winsomely beside David, Deric, and Bob, in Putnam's row of boy-adventurers who can write as well as trek. For those who sit and watch while others climb, a pleasant vertigo will develop from the perusal of this tale of dering-do. We are told that the popular form of mountain-climbing nowadays is rock-climbing, and certainly full justice is done to it in the chapters on the "Charmoz-Grepon Traverse." The more familiar snow-climbing encounters a grand old wind-storm on the heights of Mt. Blanc, before which Bradford and his professional companions descend "a million miles an hour," ending the book with an honest confession of failure in the interests of sportsmanlike caution. First and foremost, Bradford is intent on the artful sport of mountain-climbing, and he writes accordingly, freshly and simply, without a trace of self-consciousness—this last a saving virtue in the young writer. The material is not so fresh as Derio's Indian matters, but the oldness of the mountains never stales, and Bradford's book is intelligently informative as well as vivid.

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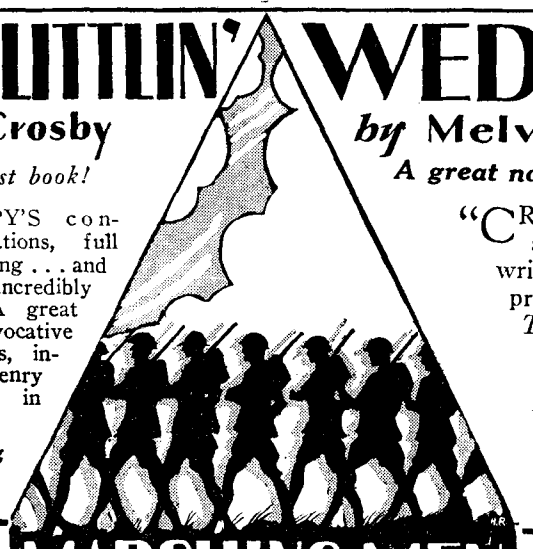

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# The New Books

## Juvenile Reprints, Etc.

*See Children's Bookshop, page 402 and 404*

Never a year draws to its close but reprints of some of the seasoned favorites of childhood make their appearance, brave in new dress and with gay illustrations to make them fitting gifts for the Christmas table. Here, in this year of grace 1927, for instance, is that adult story that never fails to hold the interest of the maturing youngster, Dickens's "The Cricket on the Hearth" (Harpers: $2.50). Francis D. Beckford, who is on the whole happier in his black and white drawings than in his color illustrations, has furnished the book with several of the first and a profusion of the latter. Mr. Beckford is in the true Dickens tradition, and his interpretations of scenes and personalities are flavorsome and attractive. Here, too, are Charlotte M. Yonge's "A Book of Golden Deeds" (Macmillan: $1.75), that treasury of brief tales of heroic devotion, and her "Unknown to History" (Harpers: $2.50), the romance of a favorite queen, Mary of Scotland. Both volumes are romantically illustrated by Clara M. Burd. Miss Yonge, if the number of her works to be reprinted is a true index to her popularity, retains the hold on young readers which has been hers for several generations, for in addition to these two volumes for older children, Harpers has reissued "Little Lucy's Wonderful Year" ($1). This chronicle of the convalescence from scarlatina of a small girl the tedium of whose quarantine was beguiled by tales of odd corners of the globe and their inhabitants is furnished with a frontispiece in color and quaint line drawings by Anne Merriam Peck. For older children than will enjoy this latter story is H. R. Hall's "Days Before History" (Crowell: $2.50), a slightly enlarged edition of a standard account of prehistoric man, and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's "The Splendid Spur" (Doran: $2.50), a good story of the days of Charles I, now made into a large gift book.

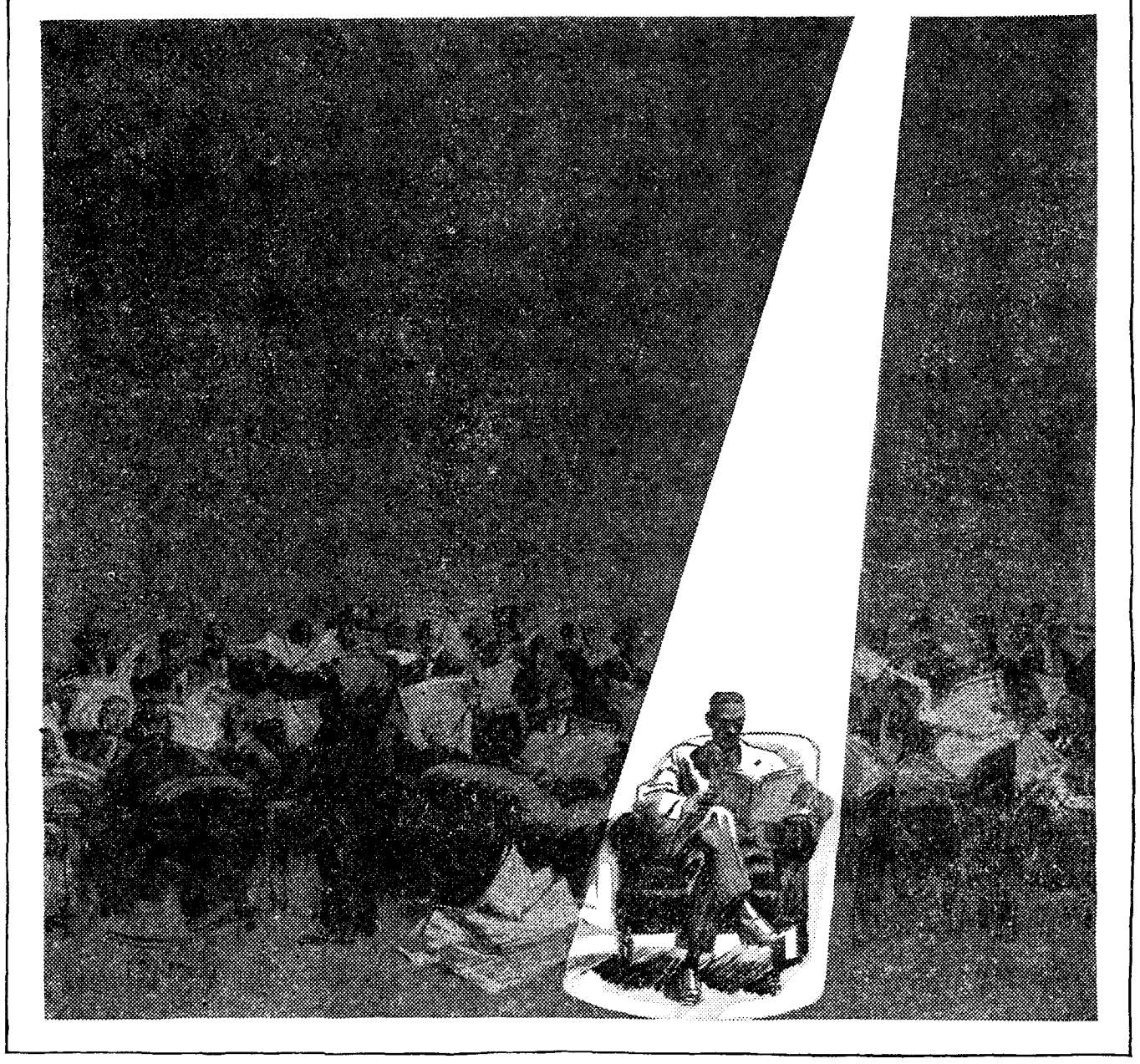
Those children who are still in the age when fairy stories and tales of fantasy make special appeal have not been forgotten in this year's reissue of old favorites. And, to interject a volume that falls into neither of these categories, mention should be made of the charming little volume that enshrines Stevenson's "A Child's Garden of Verses" (Macmillan: $1). There have been numerous editions, of course, of this delectable collection of poems, but this new one, with its graceful drawings by Marguerite Davis, and its reasonable price, should find a niche of its own. Macmillan, which issues it, has also brought out that tried and trusty favorite, Collodi's "Pinocchio" ($1.75), with gay and amusing color illustrations by Attilio Mussino supplementing his drawings in black and white, and with its text translated into English by Carol della Chiesa. Appleton has a handsome reissue of Lewis Carroll's "Alice in Wonderland" with the original Tenniel illustrations, while Jean Ingelow's beloved fairy tale, "Mopsa the Fairy" (Harpers: $1.75), has been made into a new book by some of the most delightful pictures that Dorothy Lathrop has ever drawn. Another excellent book is in print once more now that Dutton has issued it in time for Christmas giving, "Mrs. Leicester's School" ($3), by Charles and Mary Lamb. Winifred Green has decked it out charmingly with pictures in the Kate Greenaway style and flowery wreaths decorating the old tales. "The Princess With the Pea-Green Nose" (Harpers: $1), by E. H. Knatchbull-Hugessen, which we understand from the publishers has never been issued before in this country in independent form, is now put out with illustrations by Myra Cocks. This story of the beautiful princess whose only disfigurement was a nose the tip of which was bright green and whose trust and love brought her freedom from her blemish and won her a gallant husband at the same time is a charming tale, and one that should prove widely popular. A quaint old tale from the days of the Rollo books has been revived in Richard Henry Horne's "The Good-Natured Bear" (Macmillan). The book was written by an Englishman who wished his story to sound as if it were a translation from the German. With a vast amount of circumstantial detail the bear tells the Littlepump children all about his life. The silhouette cut-outs by a German artist, Lisl Hummel, make this one of the most satisfying of the season's books. Parents who were children in 1881 may recall a fanciful tale by Frank R. Stockton which appeared in the *St. Nicholas* of that year under the title "The Poor Count's Christmas." It has now been reissued in book form by Stokes ($1.50), and despite the lapse of time is still as fresh as when first it delighted young readers. Another tale that appears in new guise, and though in its present less expensive edition it lacks the color which was an added attraction in the dearer volume still remains attractive, is "The Story of Naught Kildeen" (Harcourt, Brace: $2.50), by Marie, Queen of Rumania. The book is illustrated in black and white by Job, and is an unusually good story for little girls.

Finally, we come to the books for children of the nursery age, all of them with the exception of Æsop's Fables intended for the little ones still far from graduation into an older cycle of literature. The Æsop (Harpers: $1.75) is delightfully illustrated by Louis Rhead; indeed, we understand that it was the last work done by the artist before his death. Curiously enough the publishers have prefaced the fables with an introduction taken over from what must have been the original issue of the text they are using, and which while bearing neither name nor date to range it, in the manner of its writing and certain of its statements makes it quite evident that "the present publishers" and the need for a more literal translation from the Greek than had been made in the past, have nothing to do with the present. Harper has also issued a book of nursery rhymes entitled "Jack Horner's Pie" ($2), the familiar verses of which have been selected by Lois Lenski and illustrated by her in ingenious fashion. Such a jingle, for instance, as "Simple Simon" has a full page in color facing it which in a series of diminutive illustrations illuminates the various lines of the poem. The book should appeal to the type of child who will be entertained by trying to match the details of the pictures with the appropriate lines of the verses. A slim, gay volume with vivid illustrations and brief accompanying commentary is "The Cock and the Hen" (Harpers); it was issued some two years ago by Rafael D. Szalatnay, and is a Czechoslovakian fairy tale that has fancy and charm to recommend it. Its bright colors and large pictures, as well as the simplicity of its text, should make it an excellent gift for a very young child. For the same youngster "The Playbook of Robin Hood" (Harpers) with its narrative by Susan Meriwether introducing the various figures of the Robin Hood story, and its profusion of cut-out figures and standards by Esther Peck, should afford excellent entertainment on a blustering winter day for the child who is forced to remain within doors. Three other books should appeal to this same very small person, "Rhymes of If and Why" (Duffield: $2), by Betty Sage, a large, square book of verses about children with pictures of them by Boardman Robinson; "The Animal Alphabet" (Houghton Mifflin: $2), a collection of characteristic Harrison Cady pictures and rhymes about animals made into a book sewn to lie open flat, and "The Children's *Punch*" (Scribners: $2.50) which contains verses and pictures from *Punch*, including some by Tenniel and some by E. H. Shepard.

THE PIONEER TWINS. By LUCY FITCH PERKINS. Houghton Mifflin. 1927. $1.75.

Lucy Fitch Perkins and her Twin books are classics for children in the truest sense of the word. Sometimes a teacher welcomes a book, for reasons of her own; sometimes a parent, sometimes a child. But it is probable that not many books receive from all three groups a more genuine reception than is always ready for the Twins in each new embodiment. The present volume strikes a slightly different line and a very worth while one. These are American twins, but they belong to America in solution,—America in transformation. It is a Covered Wagon story, with all the advantages of that setting, involving action and changing scene, hardships and courage,—and some little geography thrown in for subconscious stimulus. And of course there is a happy ending. This will undoubtedly take its place as one of the favorites of the series.

(*Continued on next page*)

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(*Continued from page* 394)

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"'(a) Mail matter of the fifth class shall include books consisting wholly of reading matter and containing no advertising matter other than incidental announcements of books;

"'(b) The rate of postage on books included in subdivision (a) shall be 2½ cents per pound or fraction thereof, with a minimum charge of 3 cents for each parcel and subject to the same maximum weights per parcel now prescribed by law for mail matter of the fourth class.'"

The Bill introduced in the Senate during the last Congress to provide for a separate classification of mail matter, and lower postal rates for books, as quoted in the above resolution, should be amended upon its reintroduction in the next Congress, so as to provide that existing parcel post rates shall continue applicable where such rates are less than the special rates for books specified in subdivision (b). All will recognize, however, that the main thing is to secure a separate classification of mail matter for books and rely upon the Congress to prescribe as low a rate as may be feasible.

The National Association of Book Publishers is convinced that some such legislation as this is vitally necessary to insure a reasonable and proper distribution of books. In urging the enactment of legislation to provide for a separate classification of mail matter for this important necessity it feels that it is rendering a public service of the first magnitude. Lower postal rates, by creating an increased demand for books, would of course benefit the publishers, booksellers and authors, but the benefit to the trade would not be comparable to that accruing to the public. It is obvious that the public good that would result from this stimulus to the advancement of education and culture is incalculable.

While this Association does not desire to flood the Congress with propaganda, it does deem it essential that the existing situation respecting postal rates as affecting the distribution of books be brought home forcibly to all the Senators and Representatives. It is believed that a reasonable hope may be entertained for relief from the present high postal rates if each Senator and Congressman can be brought to a serious consideration of the desirable public policy of promoting the widest possible distribution of books through the adoption of a separate classication and reasonable and uniform rates to all the people.

This Association, therefore, urges every book publisher, bookseller, librarian, author, educator, and every other person interested in the wider and cheaper distribution of books, to call this matter to the attention of the Representative in Congress from his District and of the Senators from his State, as well as any other Congressional friends, and request their support for legislation of this character during the next Congress.

The Congressmen should be requested to urge the members of the Committee on The Post Office and Post Roads of the House to take favorable action along this line and Senators should likewise be asked to push the matter with the members of the Senate Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads.

## The New Books

### Miscellaneous

(*Continued from preceding page*)

MAN. A Brief Interpretation of Man's Creation, His Psychology and His Destiny, with Suggestions on the Practical Application of Psychic Laws. By HORATIO V. GARD. Chicago: The Golden Rule Magazine. 1927. $3.50.

One of the blessings, or curses, of democracy is the semi-annual flood of works of amateur philosophy. These volumes, written usually by earnest, candid, and ignorant souls, endowed with intellectual vigor and originality but utterly unacquainted with the history of their subject, regularly repeat the fallacies of the past with the addition of a few new ones of their own. They make interesting reading as illustrations of the short span of knowledge attainable by the untrained individual mind, however capable it may be.

"Man," by Horatio V. Gard, is a good example of its type. Its philosophical theory runs as follows: the universe was created by God or Universal Spirit, the name which Mr. Gard prefers; this was accomplished by means of "conditions and laws" established by the Universal Spirit and in turn establishing electrons and intermediate forms down to the algæ and amoeba when life and "objective mind" were introduced in order to lead to the development of man.

Thus we see that "the universe of heavenly bodies was imaged and created as a secondary matter, for a place to propagate and to evolve man." This long way round was made even longer, however, by the fact that "the objective mind of the amoeba and its descendants" frequently shied off the track and in the interest of its own development neglected its rôle as a preparation for man. But eventually man appeared, with an objective conscious mind located in the cerebro-spinal nervous system and a subjective unconscious mind located in the sympathetic nervous system. This unconscious mind is nothing less than the Universal Spirit itself, possessor of all wisdom and knowledge, source of all action, but so suggestible that it at once adopts any fool idea that the conscious mind presents to it. Even with this genial limitation, however, it is so powerful that it insures man's ultimate attainment of his goal, the Perfect Ideal. For the rest, Mr. Gard believes that all medical cures are due to suggestion, that

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cancer is caused by anger and hate, that the first chapter of Genesis is not to be taken literally, and that the Immaculate Conception is more than doubtful. In this remarkable work deism and idealism, mechanism and the argument from design, the popular misconception of natural laws as forces, the popular misconception of evolution as progress, pan-psychism, and Christian Science all function as ingredients.

THE HISTORY OF CONTEMPT OF COURT. The Form of Trial and the Mode of Punishment. By Sir JOHN C. FOX. Oxford University Press. 1927.

This is an historical rather than a practical treatise upon a subject which has been of late much under discussion concerning especially injunctions issued in connection with disputes over labor troubles. That the courts have powers of summary punishment for contempts committed by parties or by officers of the court is undoubted. The questions debated in this book relate to contempts of strangers.

It will probably surprise many lawyers to learn that the theory that a court has power to punish summarily contempts by strangers rests for its foundation upon an opinion, written, but never delivered, by Mr. Justice Wilmot, in *Almon's Case* in 1765 and never published until 1802. It represents no adjudication, it is not even a *dictum*, yet upon it alone have the courts which have subsequently asserted the power based their opinions.

So far as precedent goes *Almon's Case* stands alone. This book shows abundantly that, in earlier times, such contempts were always treated as misdemeanors to be prosecuted by indictment or information upon which the accused was entitled to a trial by jury. In short *Almon's Case*, which has been so potent as a precedent, is itself without precedent and at variance with what might otherwise be considered settled law.

In this country legislation has in many states, and in the Federal law, since the act of 1831, restored the ancient practice and limited the summary power of the court to parties, officers, and those guilty of contempts in the presence or immediate vicinity of the courts. In some states such statutes have been held unconstitutional as improper legislative interference with inherent powers of the courts. Such a view is hard to defend on precedent or principle and a more thorough knowledge of the law as it was before *Almon's Case* might have led to a different decision. The courts, however, being the only absolutely uncontrolled power in the state, such mistakes it is practically impossible to correct.

This volume also contains much learning on the subject of the punishment of contempts, interesting but chiefly of historical value. The origin and meaning of the word "fine" is explained and this information will be new to most people. Until the sixteenth century, at any rate, a "fine" was never *imposed* nor was there any active verb "to fine." A fine was a voluntary payment, upon making which one was released from imprisonment. The sentence was of imprisonment but the person imprisoned might, if he chose, make the payment and must then be released. He was thus said "*finem facere*," to make an end of his controversy with the Crown. Until, at any rate, some three hundred years ago, the expression was "to make fine," not "to be fined." The court fixed, usually, the amount to be paid, though sometimes it was offered by a jury of the man's neighbors. What we should call a "fine" was then called an amercement which might be collected by distress but not by imprisonment and except in a few cases by statute there could not be both a pecuniary mulct and imprisonment for the same offense.

This is not a text-book, though parts of it may be of practical use, but is, as it is entitled, a learned and exhaustive history of an important branch of the law.

PLANT HUNTING. By ERNEST H. WILSON. Stratford. 1927. 2 vols. $15.

No horticultural explorer of recent times has traveled so far and brought home so much as the author of this book. His "Naturalist in Western China" gave a readable and interesting account of his explorations in that country and now these two handsomely illustrated volumes fill out the record of a long and very successful career as a plant hunter.

Naturally, there is not space here to note all the wonderful plants that Mr. Wilson has seen and writes about with such enthusiasm. Hundreds are mentioned, both by their picturesque vernacular names and in more precise Latin. All that any review can do with such a book is to state that for all garden lovers it is a treat, for

(*Continued on next page*)

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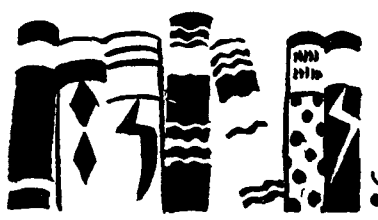

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# The New Books

## Miscellaneous

(*Continued from preceding page*)

nature lovers a revelation of what a trained naturalist can see, and for the general traveler a mine of information. The book makes no pretense of being scientific, but it certainly is a most attractive presentation of garden and plant lore gathered in nearly every country. Particularly are the flora and horticultural possibilities of Australia and New Zealand treated with enthusiasm and good sense, and the account of the comparatively new Kurume azaleas is splendid. As the volumes are thoroughly indexed they will be invaluable reference books and they certainly are a welcome addition to garden literature.

THE INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA. Edited by EDNA KENTON. Harcourt, Brace. 1927. 2 vols. $10.

There is no possible criticism to be made of Miss Kenton's work except the name. It does not deal with the Indians of North America in any such inclusive manner as the title indicates, but only with the tribes lying originally along the Great Lake region. These were the most important groups with which early American colonists came in contact, but not even numerically the most important of the northern American continent. What Miss Kenton has really given us is an admirably abridged and edited selection from the "Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents," as originally translated and prepared for publication by Ruben Gold Thwaits. These documents consist almost entirely of the reports and private letters of the Jesuit missionaries to the Iroquois, Algonquin, Huron, and allied tribes covering the years between 1611 and 1764.

No more courageous, intelligent, and self-devoted band of men ever came into the new world, and their direct and carefully observed accounts of what they found there constitute one of the most interesting and historically valuable group of documents of the period. Most of the tribes encountered have since disappeared altogether, so that these simple, priestly accounts are in many cases all that remains to us of folk lore and ethnological description. For the accounts of the Jesuit Fathers are less than any missionary accounts in the world subject to that distortion of view to which the convinced propagandist is liable in dealing with people of other faiths. Miss Kenton's work of selection is done with intelligence and with sympathetic understanding of the growing need of the modern reader to have his material put in the most convenient form. Nothing of real historic or ethnological import is omitted. The footnotes are copious and easily intelligible, which is more than can be said of most compendiums of ethnological material. The two volumes are well illustrated with maps and drawings often amusing and always informative.

Indeed, one can not contemplate these ancient diagrams of the little known New World, without coming to the conclusion that all Missionaries ought to be taught drawing as a part of their legitimate preparation, for it is possible with the aid of a reading glass, even in the reduced size of the present volumes, to derive exact botanical knowledge of the strange plants marginally sketched so long ago. Something must be said, too, of the work of the publishers in a set of books bound to supply the double need of interesting reading and scholarly research. The format is excellent, the print, especially that of the footnotes remarkably clear, a relief to the overworked scholar often looked for and seldom found. All that remains now to do with the "Jesuit Relations" is to publish selections from them in shape for school reading in a much neglected field of early American history.

TOWARDS HEALTH. By J. ARTHUR THOMSON. Putnams. 1927. $2.

This is an attempt, and a rather successful one, to present the underlying principles involved in the problem of the conservation of human health; and while in no sense a handbook of hygiene, it contains certain conclusions which must appeal to all for for their sanity.

The author repeatedly calls attention to the marked contrast between the exuberant health of wild nature and the lack of it in civilized communities and while there can be no doubt but that man has paid the price of suspending the ruthless elimination of the less favorable individuals with a decided lowering of the standard of health, it is a question whether there is not more disease among wild creatures than the author would have us understand. Certainly the studies of Dr. Moody of Chicago during the last few years on the pathology of fossils would indicate a good many diseases which by no stretch could be attributed to man's interference with the course of Nature.

Granting, however, that there is a difference in the exuberant health of wild nature and civilized man, the explanation is not far to seek. Man has by his superior intelligence overcome the obstacles to his multiplication more quickly than he has been able to adapt his body to the changed conditions of living. The result is a lack of harmony which invariably spells dis-ease. In wild nature, on the other hand, the slow process of bodily adaptation has had time to operate with a more constant and closer harmony. It is within the power of the human intellect to make the adjustments necessary to harmonize modern civilization with the standard of health attained by wild nature in which a generally stationary population and ruthless elimination of the unfit obtain. That is the direction toward health.

The sign boards which the author erects on the road toward health are first, Education, a more insistent school education in which a quickened enthusiasm for health of both body and mind is awakened. Much more is still to be done especially in a more or less depersonalized sex instruction in its positive rather than its pathological aspect. Next, and leading inevitably from a more thorough education, is the practice of eugenics without which civilized man stands a fair chance of succumbing to the overburden of the increasing numbers of the biologically and socially unfit. The author is very careful not to advocate eugenic measures which run counter to the present state of social and ethical sentiment, such as infanticide at one extreme and the institution of a "reproductive caste" at the other. He does urge that health considerations weigh more heavily in the choice of mates and that parenthood be restricted more generally than at present, either by so-called birth control or segregation of the sexes in the more extreme cases of marked physical and mental inferiority where a single offspring is a social crime. Selection of parents must also be practiced more effectually now that Natural Selection, to which civilized man cannot return, has been so largely eliminated from life.

The author does not seem to be quite as thoroughly at home in this new field of endeavor as in straight Natural History. There are several errors of fact which have escaped him and there seems to be more "padding" than necessary even in a popular book and a rather loose arrangement of topics. Nevertheless the book is eminently readable as Thomson's books always are.

CITY HEALTH ADMINISTRATION. By CARL E. MCCOMBS. Macmillan. 1927.

Dr. McCoombs's monograph is of considerable interest as an approach to the subject of municipal health administration primarily from the standpoint of public administration as a whole, since the author represents the National Institute of Public Administration and the New York Bureau of Municipal Research. At the same time the book gives evidence of a very thorough study of all the material at hand and gives an exceedingly sound picture of current health practice in the United States.

Dr. McCombs's views about the general constitution and powers of the health board and his insistence that activities like plumbing inspection, garbage disposal, and street cleaning should be placed under other departments and clearly separated from the real health activities of the community are thoroughly sound. The reviewer is not inclined to agree with his view that preventive work of health departments should be separated sharply from the maintenance of public facilities for the care of sickness and allied on the other hand with relief activities in a department of public welfare, as the modern tendency is rather in the direction of a clearer relation between preventive and curative health work. This is, however, a question on which there is ample room for a wide difference of opinion. On the other hand Dr. McCombs's conception of the field of public health nursing as limited mainly to the supervision of the health of children and his conclusion that it makes little difference whether public health nursing activities are organized in the bureau of nursing or as a part of a bureau of child hygiene, is distinctly regrettable. Evidence in recent years seems overwhelming that the former arrangement is the only sound one.

Dr. McCombs makes ample use of the Appraisal Form of the Committee on Administrative Practice of the American Public Health Association and makes some very interesting comparisons of the ideal distribution of the budget according to the American Health Association's standards and the actual distribution of the budget in a group of seventy-two cities. Far too much money is now spent on food inspection and sanitary inspection, far too little on vital statistics, venereal disease control, tuberculosis control, and above all child health. The author's emphasis on the importance of computing the unit costs of various health activities is sound, although the task in practice will be found to present many difficulties. The chapters at the end of the book on hospital management are of much interest and Dr. McCombs's emphasis on adequate nursing service and on provision for nursing education under independent educational auspices is thoroughly sound, as is also his conception of the hospital as not solely a curative but in large measure an educational institution.

The book contains in an appendix an excellent brief selected bibliography. The volume as a whole should prove of value even to professional public health workers and excellently fulfils its primary purpose, that of interpreting community health service as a function of government to the intelligent student of social problems.

LAWYERS AND LITIGANTS IN ANCIENT ATHENS: THE GENESIS OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION. By ROBERT J. BONNER. University of Chicago Press. 1927.

One agreeable quality of the ancient Greeks—at least, of the Athenians of the classical period—is their lack of professionalism. It is difficult for a specialized modern man to manifest his ability except by using technical jargon and by showing that he is initiated into the recondite mysteries of his trade. The Athenians, inventing modern thought, speak as laymen and are comprehensive to laymen. This contrast is especially remarkable in the domain of law, in which a people reveals its methods of practical thinking—of seeking the truth and upholding justice in the ordinary, unmetaphysical world.

Professor Bonner successfully demonstrates the fact that in Athens justice was mainly administered by amateurs. Every citizen might be a judge, every citizen might have to plead in court, and even those prosecutions which are today conducted by the Government were left to public-spiirted or interested individuals. So legal procedure and language alike were free from technical complexity. So, too, the whole Athenian people had a knowledge of the law and an interest in it which earned them a name for litigiousness and enabled them to appreciate the debates of Euripides and the burlesque of Aristophanes. Down to the end of the classical period, there is an air of informality and amateurishness about legal proceedings. Public opinion does not approve of the professional advocates and sycophants who begin to appear as a result of the press of business ensuing on the increase of trade and of the Empire; private citizens have to apologize for any special knowledge of the law which the nature of their case may compel them to reveal. There are no rules of evidence, and no body of case-law or precedents; every court is free to determine facts and to interpret laws as it pleases. Attractive oratory is required; the most inconsequent arguments are gaily advanced; personal abuse and the production of the pleader's weeping children are recognized and presumably effective devices. The jury demand a reasonable amount of entertainment, and are inclined to rowdiness. That such enjoyable proceedings should ever lead to the satisfactory administration of justice is only possible in a small community where the jury already know something of the litigants and of the facts of the case.

This is the picture which emerges clearly from Professor Bonner's detailed account of the legal system of Athens. A certain flatness of style makes his essay somewhat difficult to read, but all the facts are there, and it gives the careful reader a good grasp of the circumstances in which the great orators spoke, and the historic political trials were conducted, and Socrates was condemned to death.

The chapter on the development of oratory is especially good. One would have been grateful if the author had given us his own opinion more often. For example, on the capital question, whether justice was well administered or not, he modestly contents himself with quoting the rival opinions of Rogers and Jebb, with a pertinent, but very brief, comment of his own. So, too, a more detailed discussion of the famous trials which he summarizes would have been interesting. His knowledge of his subject entitles him to express his personal views which one misses in this otherwise most useful statement of the facts.

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## Philosophy

THINKING ABOUT THINKING. By CASSIUS J. KEYSER. Dutton. 1927. $1.

The latest addition to the little series inaugurated by "Daedalus," "Icarus," and "The Mongol in Our Midst," is by the Professor of Mathematics at Columbia University, whose work has done so much to introduce the philosophy of function to the younger generation of American mathematicians. It is, however, essentially a chapter from an amateur's Diversions in Psychology, and, as such, its suitability for the series, though greater than that of certain other recent volumes, is questionable.

Vaihinger, author of the "Philosophy of As If," has already concentrated attention on the nature of hypothesis. The nature of an hypothesis is to treat some statement *as if* it were true,—the If-Then form of thought. Professor Keyser proposes to call this "postulational" or "autonomous" thinking, as opposed to the "organic" thinking of animals. In organic thinking, he explains, we are no longer dealing with the mechanical reaction of something inorganic, but with the action of an organism responding to a stimulus as a living abode. When we think in terms of If-Then, we employ postulates, and the doctrines arising from such postulates are autonomous in the sense that they are a logically organized whole containing as an integral part the foundations on which they stand.

The view that every body of doctrine can be related to a special group of postulates is worth emphasizing, and has already suggested various lines of research. The professor urges us to learn under all circumstances to locate concealed postulates. The task of postulate detection, he thinks, is urgent, immense, and omnipresent; its practice will foster modesty and tolerance, and will make for the maintenance and advancement of good will in the world. That would be well enough were it not that a vast psychological and linguistic inquiring (of which no hint is given) precedes and accompanies any such detective process. The term "postulate" confuses Vaihinger's useful distinction between hypotheses and fictions; the "economic man," for example, has in no sense been "abandoned," as Professor Keyser suggests, since as a methodological fiction it never claimed to be verifiable.

Finally, Professor Keyser's own postulate of a theory of definitions which denies that the process can legitimately be circular is related to a use of the words "concept" and "proposition" equally at variance with the tendencies of modern science. Science, indeed, is here treated under the heading "empirical thinking," and contrasted with the super-sensuous works of art achieved by postulational thinking and "revealed" only to the infinitely delicate sensibility of the pure understanding. So long as we remain at this level of exposition the scientist is likely to reply that thinking about thinking is a dangerous occupation unless accompanied by an oratorical moratorium. Had he declared such a moratorium, however, Professor Keyser's little excursion into Kenlore (as he, at one point dubs epistemology) might have lost much of its appeal, and there are many to whom it should prove stimulating and even helpful. For where it most carries conviction, it is written with an engaging simplicity which reveals a personality at once uncompromising and sincere.

PHILOSOPHY. By *Bertrand Russell*. Norton. $3.

THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY OF EQUALITY. By *T. V. Smith*. University of Chicago Press. $3.

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SELECTED PAPERS OF BERTRAND RUSSELL. Selected and edited by *Bertrand Russell*. Modern Library. 95 cents net.

THE A B C OF PSYCHOLOGY. By *Vance Randolph*. Vanguard.

PHILOSOPHICAL ATTITUDES. By *Duren J. H. Ward*. Denver: Divide Publishing Co.

SYMBOLISM. By *Alfred North Whitehead*. Macmillan. $1.50.

## Poetry

THE EVERGREEN TREE. By KATHLEEN MILLAY. Boni & Liveright. 1927. $2.

This is the first volume of poems of a sister of a famous American poet. Miss Kathleen Millay has never published in periodicals and her work has been written over a space of years during which time none save her very intimate friends knew of it. Her publishers have now brought it out in a particularly attractive format. There is pith and decided talent in her brief poems. They are the work of one possessed of an unusual spiritual loneliness. Bitterness and beauty are mingled in one cup. It is difficult to prophesy her future as a lyrist but the tortured wisdom in some of these poems is arresting. The following is an example of her concise power:

*It's woods I want and the sea,*
*It's wide, black, wind blown spaces*
*Where I may breathe and be free,*
*And forget the thousand faces*
*That sneer and smile and know,*
*That pry and question and wonder—*
*It's ice I want and the snow,*
*It's lightning I want and the thunder.*

BATS IN THE BELFRY. By L. DE GIBERNE SIEVEKING. Brentano's. 1927. $3.

The writing of true nonsense verse is one of the most difficult of arts. Mr. Sieveking is a nonsense-writer born, and yet not so remarkable a one as his illustrator, John Nash, is a nonsense-artist. John Nash's drawings are superb in their spontaneous idiocy, and quite rightly commended by Max Beerbohm in his Preface to the Drawings. Of Gilbert K. Chesterton's Introduction to the Poems we must say that Mr. Chesterton seems to be trying to prove something about the late War rather than properly confining himself to the quality of Mr. Sieveking's writing. Mr. Sieveking wrote his verses in a German prison camp and was not a conscientious objector to war but to the invasion of Belgium, Mr. Chesterton takes pains to tell us. What earthly difference does that make? Were Mr. Sieveking a Hottentot who had just learned English that fact would merely enhance the interest of his work, perhaps, as a literary curiosity. It would have nothing to do with whether his verse was funny or not. As a matter of fact it is funny, occasionally it is delicious. It is not so good as Mr. Belloc's nonsense verse, but that is an extremely high standard to set. It has a first fine careless rapture, and, we may add, a carelessness, often, of detail, which combine, even when you think they won't, in a single beauty of perfect preposterousness. Almost better than any of the more ambitious attempts we relish Mrs. Blew of the Low Countries in Example III of Blatant Naughtiness. Here also, and it is not often so in the book, Mr. Sieveking's verse is better than Mr. Nash's accompanying picture:

*There was once a charwoman of Amsterdam*
*Who went sailing away to sea*
*On the top of a powerful electric tram*
*That she stole from the L. C. C.*
*With a bee in her bonnet,*
*A cuckoo-clock on it,*
*And ninety-nine packets of tea!*
*In a fit of contrition*
*She cut the ignition,*
*And flew away home on the back of a bee,*
*Shouting, "Hey-Ho! Fiddle-de-dee!*
*What's the use of work?"*

THE EEL AND OTHER POEMS. By EVAN MORGAN. Brentano's. 1927. $1.50.

Alfred Noyes writes a measured and intelligent foreword to this volume of poems by a new poet. "The Eel," the title-poem, is certainly one worthy of remark. Mr. Noyes thinks it has a right to survive. We ourselves feel that it will. Mr. Morgan's other poems in this volume are always marked with originality even when the technique is faulty. "Somewhere between Oxford and Morocco," runs the publisher's note about the Honorable Evan Morgan, "he found his way to Rome,—as a convert. In Rome he is known as Cameriere Segreto di Spada e Cappa to H. H. Benedict XV and Pius XI, a Commander with Star of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, and a Knight of Malta." In his past he has exhibited in the Paris Salon, been Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labor, been in the Foreign Press Bureau, and stood as Conservative candidate for the Constituency of Limehouse. The Honorable Evan Morgan is a valuable addition to the ranks of Catholic poets. "Angelus Dei" is a long poem with some remarkable passages.


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* * *

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* * *

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Edited by BURTON RASCOE

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# The New Books

## Poetry

(*Continued from preceding page*)

THE NIGHT EXPRESS. By ARTHUR CREW INMAN. Dutton. 1927. $2.

Mr. Inman has had an excellent idea for this book, has drawn on genuine experience, and his expression is often vigorous. Some of his descriptions are vivid. He is rather better at achieving a cumulative effect in his descriptions than at writing distinguished poetry taken line by line. Poetry, in the strictest sense of the word, "The Night Express" is not, but it echoes the experiences and conveys the glamour of railroad travel to those who, as the flap of the jacket words it, "cannonade across the magic of the star-strewn dark" on their way East or West.


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**NAPOLEON**

THE MAN OF DESTINY

*by*

**Emil Ludwig**

**"The last book I have read in its entirety is Ludwig's NAPOLEON —one of the greatest biographies *I have read in a long time." Daniel L. Marsh, President, Boston University, in World's Work.* 126th thousand. Octavo. Illustrated. 732 pages. 16 full-page plates. $3.00.**

**The Jesuit Enigma** *by* **Dr. E. Boyd Barrett**

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WILDWOOD FABLES. By ARTHUR GUITERMAN. Dutton. $2.

From the great Tyrannosaurus to the Jersey mosquito Mr. Guiterman, one of the most delightful rhymesters of our day, celebrates beasts large and small in this little volume. There is seriousness and wisdom in some of the verse and wisdom mixed with nonsense in some of it. Mr. Guiterman is an enthusiastic woodsman, and his rhymes are no mere product of the study. We can recommend his work to all lovers of the open as well as to those who rejoice in perusing a master of rhyme and metre. The poem in the volume that appealed most to our light mind is one that the late Lewis Carroll might have been proud to sign. It is called "Futility," and here are two verses of it:

*And still beside the purling stream,*
*In care of doughty ram and bull,*
*The cows went right on brewing cream,*
*The sheep went right on sprouting wool.*

*I groaned, "I know the way you feel;*
*We just drag on till something stops;*
*And still the calves keep making veal,*
*And still the lambs keep growing chops."*

But that is a mere nonsensical peak midway the book. Both before it and after there is plenty of variety of mood and a fine, fresh, piney-woods atmosphere.

## Science

A POPULAR ACCOUNT OF FOSSIL PLANTS. By FRANK H. KNOWLTON. Princeton University Press. 1927. $3.50.

The evolution controversy having died down, except among the ignorant or bigoted, the appearance of a book on fossil plants can be viewed calmly and from a non-controversial attitude. Nearly all our knowledge of the evolutionary history of the plant kingdom has come from studies of the rock-written evidence unearthed by the paleo-botanists.

Of these the late Dr. Knowlton, who died only a few months before the present volume appeared, was one of the greatest. For years he was the custodian of Mesozoic plants at the National Museum, and, among professional botanists, his monumental "Catalog of Mesozoic and Cenozoic Plants of North America" is standard. This latest book puts all that knowledge and experience of the fossil record of plant life into non-technical form. And on that score the book compares favorably with earlier efforts of Scott and the incomparable Dawson. Knowlton's book states the main facts of fossil botany, the making of a fossil, and the horizons in which they are found. But of the intensely dramatic nature of these processes, of the all but breath-taking significance of the long trail from the coal measures to our modern flora, there is scarcely a hint. From much this same material Berry in his "Tree Ancestors" made an absorbingly interesting story. Erudition need not kill good writing about science, but it has very nearly done so in this book.

THE ANIMAL MIND. By FRANCES PITT. Stokes. 1927. $4.50.

This is a most readable book on the behavior of the higher animals, based upon personal observations made in the field and under the artificial conditions of confinement. The author has not only been a keen observer of animals under natural conditions but has also kept many of the smaller mammals and birds as pets and reared many from the day of birth so that she has been able to determine in a measure the behavior of animals not under the influence of paternal instruction.

As a result of these observations, the conclusion is drawn that among the birds and mammals, experience plays a more important rôle in determining action than do instincts. The relative importance of instinct and intelligence is open to question, although observers generally are agreed that instinctive actions are frequently modified by experience—even microscopic forms frequently react differently as a result of experience. To this extent they may be said to have a certain degree of intelligence which has a controlling influence in behavior. This would seem, however, far from proving "thinking" on the part of those creatures which profit by experience, a process which the author unqualifiedly asserts they exhibit. Certainly very few modern psychologists would go to the extent which Miss Pitt does in ascribing thoughts and emotions to the wild creatures.

She appreciates the individuality of many wild animals with which she is intimately acquainted but is hardly justified in her conclusion that "without intelligence you cannot have individuality."

The book makes delightful reading not only on account of its facts but also because it fairly vibrates with the English countryside, with the beauties of the ample fields and gardens in which she has given her pets free run, and where she has watched in unhurried manner the daily life of birds and beasts. Some of her extravagances regarding the mental powers of her beloved animals may be forgiven because of the wholesome atmosphere engendered by the contact with wild creatures and untrammelled Nature.

## Travel

IN THE HEART OF SPAIN. By THOMAS EWING MOORE. New York: Universal Knowledge Foundation. 1927.

What is the heart of Spain? Commercially speaking it is, perhaps, Catalonia with its thriving port of Barcelona; politically it must be Castile enthroning the capital city of Madrid; educationally it might be Leon whose principal city, Salamanca, has been a seat of learning for seven centuries; historically, the choice, possibly, would again fall on Castile wherein stands proud but crumbling Toledo, the ancient seat of the Visigoths. To Mr. Moore the real heart is Andalusia of the genial south which cradles Seville and Cordova and Granada, beloved of travelers. Andalusia with its great monuments of the past, the custodian of the supreme architectural achievements of the Moors, a land that embosoms the beauty of mountains and vineyards, and cities of a patrician race.

The author sketches the historical background of Andalusia, which is one with that of its sister provinces of Spain, of the successive peoples who marched into it as conquerors and left their impress of race in the medieval vigor of the people—Iberians, Celts, Phœnicians, Romans, Visigoths, and Moors. His tour through Andalusia begins at Gibraltar and Algeciras and follows the wild gorge of the high sierra to Ronda, that most remarkably situated town in Europe, whose majesty of setting and historic interest would seem to justify more adequate treatment than is given to it. Seville is next visited and for half the length of the book the city's splendors are described and its people are shown at work and play and worship. In great detail the famous *fiestas* of Holy Week are described with their medieval pageantry, their elaborate ceremonies and lively fairs, and carnivals which are held on other occasions during the year. Andalusian dances and music which are features, chiefly, of the music halls and of societies organized to perpetuate national art are described.

A short chapter on Spanish art is remarkable chiefly for the omission of El Greco's name from the roster and from the discussion of the great masters of Spanish painting, an oversight that will irritate those modern critics who consider El Greco's work to equal if not surpass that of Velasquez and Murillo, and to a large art loving public whose belated recognition of the genius of this master is all the more ardent for being withheld so long.

From Seville the footsteps of Columbus are followed across country to Palos, from whence the great navigator set sail on his momentous voyage of discovery, and to La Rabida where, in the immense Franciscan monastery, he and his son received hospitality for six years prior to his departure for the New World.

Cordova and Granada are also visited but in their comparatively brief descriptions, the author, presupposing too much familiarity with them on the part of the reader, has not adequately visualized the glories of the incomparable Mosque and marvelous Alhambra or recreated a picture of the gleaming cities in which they rest, towns which are among the most picturesque in Spain. The journey includes some of the lesser towns of Andalusia and ends at Cadiz, "the whitest city in the world." The final stages of Mr. Moore's pilgrimage were made by motor, and he gives a number of practical hints for those who would travel in this manner.

THE DRAGON AND THE LOTUS. By *Crosbie Garstin.* Stokes. $2.50.

GEORGE WASHINGTON: Colonial Traveler. By *John C. Fitzpatrick.* Bobbs-Merrill. $5.

MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA. By *Harry A. Franck.* Dansville, N. Y.: Owen Publishing Co.

THE JAPANESE EMPIRE. By *Harry A. Franck.* Dansville, N. Y.: Owen Publishing Co.

CHINA. By *Harry A. Franck.* Dansville, N. Y.: Owen Publishing Co.

ALGERIA FROM WITHIN. By *R. V. C. Bodley.* Bobbs-Merrill. $4.

SEEING ITALY. By *E. M. Newman.* Funk & Wagnalls. $5 net.

EUROPEAN SKYWAYS. By *Lowell Thomas.* Houghton Mifflin. $5.

ITALY FROM END TO END. By *H. Warner Allen.* Dodd, Mead.

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# The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*.

*R. J. M., San Francisco, Cal., asks for a list of books which would indicate the attitude taken by the philosophers toward women and their place in society.*

AN idea of the attitude not only of the philosophers but of their epochs toward the place of women in society, may be obtained rapidly and in a most ingratiating manner, from "A Short History of Women," by John Langdon-Davies (Viking). Possibly its manner seems ingratiating to me because I have read so many books on this subject that were intermittently or continuously bad-tempered, and this is calm, however incisive. It is a book to be enjoyed by anyone with an interest in biology or in economics.

*G. V. L., Brookline, Mass., asks if there have not been brought out, within a year or so, one or two modern editions of Theocritus, and if there is an edition with both text and translation, to be given to someone as an introduction to Theocritus.*

THE edition with both text and translation is the one in the Loeb Classical Library, in "Greek Bucolic Poets" (Putnam), in which the English version is by J. M. Edmonds. There is an attractive translation by Andrew Lang of "Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus," with an introductory essay on the first-named, in the Golden Treasury series published by Macmillan. The modern editions asked for are evidently "Theocritus: Idyls," translated by R. C. Trevelyan, and published by Boni & Liveright in a limited edition for five dollars, "Greek Idyls. Pastorals, Songs, Mimes, Tales, Epigrams, of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus," in rhymed verse with a critical introduction by D. M. Robinson (Maxwelton: $10) and "The Idyls of Theocritus with the fragments of Bion and Moschus," translated by J. H. Hallard, in the Broadway Translations published by Dutton ($3).

*M. J. D., Woodstock, Ill., asks for a book giving the duties of a social secretary.*

"THE SOCIAL SECRETARY," by Elizabeth Myers (Brentano's), gives a detailed description of the duties and responsibilities of this position. A companion volume is "The Social Letter" (Brentano's).

*G. E. C., Dover, N. J., asks for a list of recent biographies for reading and discussion in a club that has greatly enjoyed Ludwig's "Napoleon."*

WHETHER this group will so greatly enjoy Ludwig's "Bismarck" (Little, Brown), depends upon its ability to admire a just and temperate presentation of a personality, regardless of any repellant qualities in the personality itself. This is one of the biographies that are histories as well: for more than one reason it sets itself a far harder task than either of those that came before it. Vladimir Poliakoff's "The Tragic Bride" (Appleton) is also of the material of history: it follows his life of the Dowager Empress Marie, of Russia, "Mother Dear" (Appleton), and justifies the expectation that everyone who read the earlier book must have had, that the most understanding biography of the Empress Alexandra would be written by this author. In this moving but never sentimental record we have it: Mr. Poliakoff, the famous "Augur" of the *London Times*, speaks out of a profound and many-sided knowledge of his subject, and with a spirit peculiarly Russian, however cosmopolitan his manner. This spirit shows most strikingly in the curious mingling of attraction and repulsion with which he approaches the chapter on Rasputin, but its value is evident in all his judgments of Russian character and national psychology.

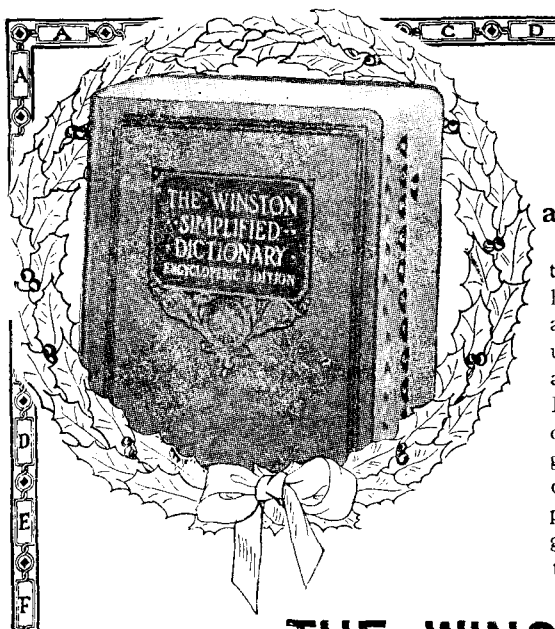
The "Shelley" of Professor W. E. Peck (Houghton Mifflin) will take its place among the great literary biographies. Another fine example of the literary biography with which this year has been distinguished is Michael Sadleir's "Anthony Trollope" (Houghton Mifflin). We have had at least two biographies for purposes of rehabilitation, or at least revaluation: Elizabeth Haldane's "George Eliot" (Appleton), and Honoré Willsie Morrow's "The Father of Little Women" (Little, Brown). In the former, a reasoned analysis of a much misunderstood personality is combined with an evaluation, from our present standards, of novels that were marked at first far too high and then far too low. In the latter study, Bronson Alcott is rescued from the ridicule of his contemporaries and the light laughter of "The Mauve Decade" long enough to remind us that after all he was many years ahead of his time in educational matters and that the laughter that silenced him retarded our educational processes by many a year. One might call Mary Agnes Hamilton's "Carlyle" a biography of this sort, for it is intended to restore Carlyle to an audience who thinks it has outgrown him, or that he has no message for the strenuous life of today.

But the most provocative biographies of the season are by no means intended to bring back their subjects to popular approval. Paxton Hibben's "Henry Ward Beecher" (Doran), for instance, looks the Tilton case square in the evidence, as squarely as ever Mr. E. L. Pearson looked at the case of Lizzie Borden, and with much the same result on the verdict of the reader. "Commodore Vanderbilt" is not given to hosannas, and how far from an eulogy is "Boss Tweed"! After the records of our recent history, such as Mark Sullivan's "Our Times" (Scribner), now in its second delightful volume, the pleasant prattlings of Henry Collins Brown in "In the Golden Nineties," and other volumes of (Valentine's Manual), the grim record in Don Seitz's "Dreadful Decade," and a line of other such books, every one sure of an audience, come the biographies that further document our studies of our middle distances. Among these Gamaliel Bradford's sympathetic study of "D. L. Moody" (Doran), stands out by reason of its ability to recognize and to point out essentials and distinguish them from passing and relatively superficial matters. Lewis Browne's "That Man Heine" (Macmillan), is as much a study of Jewish psychology as of an individual's life: if it does not explain the poems—and what book could?—it at least gives something of their background.

*H. H., Columbus, Ohio, is making such study of modern German writers as is possible without familiarity with the language. With what translations could such an equipment be made?*

TWO of the most important books in the German language for a long time are available in excellent English translations: Oswald Spengler's "Decline of the West" (Knopf), and Count Keyserling's "The Travel Diary of a Philosopher" (Harcourt, Brace). "The Spanish Journey" (Harcourt, Brace), is an admirable introduction to the art-criticism of Julius Meier-Graefe, and also admirably translated. With the biographies of Emil Ludwig the English-speaking world is familiar. In translated novels, we take what we can get, and that gives us a good deal of Thomas Mann—very little as yet of his brother Heinrich. This was forcibly brought to my mind when I met Heinrich Mann in Paris some months since, and trying for conversational purposes to bring something that he had written back to my mind, brought up something by Thomas every time I dredged for it. At last I desperately admitted this to him, and he said I was not to worry, because everyone was like that and he was used to it. We have of Thomas Mann not only the recently translated two-volume "Magic Mountain" (Knopf), but the far finer "Buddenbrooks" (Knopf), which I should by all means read. There is a new Sudermann novel, "The Mad Professor," but there seems no particular reason for excitement over it. In "The Jeweller of Bagdad," by Fritz Wittels (Doran), we have a sardonic, improper, and improving study of a nature forever inventing exquisite tests for love, such as torture love out of existence; the beauty of the language is unusually well preserved in the translation. The most important novel from Germany lately, however, so far as giving us a picture of life there now is concerned, is undoubtedly "The Gateway to Life," by Frank Thiess (Knopf). This is a novel of adolescence, the first of a series that will carry the hero further on in life; it is, however, already so up to the moment that it looks back upon the *wandervogel* movement as a romantic incident in history rather than as the force in present-day life that the usual American reader thinks it is. If Wedekind's "Awakening of Spring" has frightened anyone away from German novels of adolescence, he should be assured that young love in this story is the most appealing feature of the book.

*B. J. Z., University of North Carolina,* says that *G. E. L.* will find in the translations of the "North Sea Poems" of Heine the opposite-page arrangement that he asks for. "This edition was published," she says, "by the Open Court Publishing Company in 1917, if I remember correctly. Mr. Untermeyer refers to the Jones translation in the preface to his own. The introduction to "North Sea Poems" is a brilliant piece of analysis." *S. N. D., Smith College,* adds to the advice given *E. D., McNary, Arizona,* on a Greek grammar and reader, "The First Year of Greek," by James T. Allen (Macmillan), saying that it is an excellent book for students more mature than schoolboys; it introduces almost from the first reading of intrinsic interest, bits of Plato or Menander, and contains in itself all grammatical material necessary for a beginner. "Or," he continues, "if a student prefers to approach Greek through Homer, there is C. Pharr's "Homeric Greek," which is so arranged as to allow him to begin the Iliad in the original almost immediately." The poem about the "Wooden-headed Lunatic" has been identified, and *E. M. F., Harrisburg, Pa.,* has sent a fair copy of all its eight stanzas, which will be forwarded to the correspondent who so desired it. It is called "The Figurehead: a Salt-sea Yarn," and appeared in *Punch; W. R. B.,* writing on the letterhead of this review, believes the author to be Crosbie Garstin, author of "The Owl's House" (Stokes), and other colorful romances, adding "the only other person, it seems to me, who could have written it would be Cecily Fox-Smith." *M. W., New York,* adds to the novels of illegitimacy the "leisurely and delightful 'David Penstephen' of Richard Pryce," saying that as a novel of the right kind of courage and adjustment to the situation it should be as helpful as "Annette and Sylvie," and that while she has always suspected it of being a *roman à clef*, she has never found the *clef*. To the same list *E. R. P., New York,* adds "The Book Without a Name" (Brentano), purporting to be the journal of an unmarried English lady to her son. This new novel to take the subject seriously, "Venture's End" (Harcourt) has a rich vein of unconscious humor. Some writers are born humorous, some are so by intention, but some, like Karen Michaelis, are funny without knowing it. *F. R. P., Manohet, Mass.,* whose opinions on children's books I have learned to respect, says that one seldom mentioned by the authorities is "Skeezics and Pal," by Frank King (Reilly and Lee); and that he believes that even though some of the characters are taken from the author's comic strips, the book is "superlatively good." And *J. C., Asheville, N. C.,* reports that "Vathek" may be obtained in the Abbey Classics Series, 231 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, for one-fifty, and is all that Belloc claimed for it.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## Auction Sales

THE two leading auction houses will get into the present season in earnest on the last three days of November. At both, historical autographs and documents of consequence will be offered. Monday and Tuesday will see the dispersal at the Anderson Galleries, of what has long been one of the notable Boston collections, that of the late Zachary T. Hollingsworth. Of a family of great collectors, Mr. Hollingsworth was all but the last of the early members of the Club of Odd Volumes, and the passing of his autographs will recall many memories of the famous sales of half a century ago, when American collectors were as keen, and quite as intelligent in the pursuit of their hobbies, as any of their successors.

Two more Button Gwinnett signatures ought to satisfy the aspirants for complete sets of Signers of the Declaration of Independence, for a while, especially as there are also three Lynchs among the Hollingsworth offerings. Only one of the latter is a full signature, and all three are cut, which is sufficient evidence that in spite of the late furor over Gwinnett, a satisfactory Lynch is still infinitely further from ordinary expectations. The sale of these five signatures, also, is likely to demonstrate one thing that needs to be kept in mind by beginners in the collecting game, that it is not the thing, but the condition of the thing, that makes the price of it. The two Gwinnetts purchased at public sale by Dr. Rosenbach, for unheard of prices, have not been affected seriously by the numerous other signatures which these prices brought to light. If he buys one of the two in the Hollingsworth sale, he will still have all the Gwinnetts of first rate importance that are available for a collection of Signers.

The average importance of these documents is very high. One of the most interesting is a certified copy, made at Annapolis, from the original sent by post riders to inform the Committees of Correspondence of the situation at the close of the day of Concord and Lexington. Nothing could show more vividly the situation in the colonies, or the spirit with which the provincial leaders were devoting themselves to their duties. There are several letters containing references to Benedict Arnold that help to form an estimate of his character. The most quotable is from Colonel Tallmadge, who had the custody of André and who wrote immediately after the latter's death; ". . . I was obliged to leave the parade (i.e., the scene of the execution) in a flood of tears. . . . I wish Arnold had been in his place"

War has a lighter side as well. It was a Member of Congress, naturally, who wrote in 1776 that "I have just received a Barrel Rum, the price is very high but I cannot live without rum." It is an Aide to Washington who reports, with commendable moderation, that "supplies intended for the frontier seldom arrive without much loss." A letter for some ardent seeker after antiques is dated 1786, ordering Windsor chairs at 11 shillings 3 pence each.

There is a sprinkling of documents that do not fall within the Revolutionary period. One of these is signed by Mr. Hollingsworth's name-saint, during the Mexican war, recognizing "my want of proper qualifications for the office," and that circumstances might "make it desirable for the general good that some other individual than myself should be selected as the candidate." There is tragedy, as well as a reminder of a well-nigh forgotten episode in our literary history, in a letter in which Jared Sparks (whose name will be found in the nineteenth century biographical dictionaries) tells the reasons (which proved quite true) why Washington Irving ought not to write a Life of Washington. There is a vast deal of New England, again, in the letter in which Emerson says that "Mr. H. D. Thoreau is a man of profound and symmetrical nature" and that "Margaret Fuller (this for those who know her kin) is acquainted with the best people in New York as well as Boston." These are among the lesser items in an assortment which ranges from Champlain to Roger Williams, with Queen Elizabeth and Marie Antoinette (written September 4, 1790) to prove that the domination of woman is not altogether a new thing.

The sale on Wednesday evening is at the American Art Association. It will open with a group of documents, which it is a great pity to have separated. The auctioneers might at least have given some courageous and public spirited buyer a chance to secure them as a single lot, instead of forcing thirty-nine separate competitions. These papers, of which twenty-six are signed by Jefferson, all relate to the troops of Burgoyne who were surrendered at Saratoga and held as prisoners at Charlottesville in Virginia. Another series of papers which are in danger of getting separated relate to the annexation of Texas, while a third group, scattered through the sale catalogue under the names of various writers, concern the doings of Captain John Barry of the embryo American Navy.

A considerable run of letters and papers signed by the Presidents, starts off with seven Washington pieces, and includes a wide choice of Lincoln items for those who may have failed to get what they wanted at the recent special sale of Lincolniana. The most interesting, as illustrating the importance of evidence of actual personal contact, is a Sheffield fruit basket, on the bottom of which Lincoln scratched his name. The fact that the name is properly engraved on the handle would have given this piece comparatively slight interest, or value, compared with the rough memorandum of ownership on the bottom. Equally reminiscent of simpler days is a statement of expenses, while abroad on a diplomatic mission, in the handwriting of John Quincy Adams. A Zachary Taylor letter was written from Florida, and describes the difficulties of the campaign against the Seminoles.

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THE second portion of the library of the late Sir George Holford will be sold at Sotheby's in London on December 5 to 9. Readers of Dr. Rosenbach's new book will examine the catalogue with a special interest, and probably a good deal of amazement, for it is now known that the American book-seller had his pick of this great

(*Continued on next page*)


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## The Compleat Collector

*(Continued from preceding page)*

collection, and that these are the things he left. It would probably not be correct to say that they are what he did not want, for even "Dr. R." has to stop somewhere, and the astonishing thing is the evidence of the richness of the Dorchester House library when it was intact. Here are offered the Hypnerotomachia on vellum, the 1481 Dante with the full series of 19 copper engravings, Aldines, and French eighteenth century boudoir books beyond easy counting. As for condition, the cataloguer remarks, in the reserved English fashion, that "practically every volume is in an old binding of first rate importance." This of five Groliers, two "Maiolli," the owner whose recent identification with Thomas Mallieu was a triumph of scholarly acumen, and one with the name of Mark Lauwrin of Watervliet.

BIRRELL and Garnett of Soho, London, have come into possession of a considerable quantity of the paper of Edward Gibbon. Some of these, such as tailor's bills, and others more consequential, are listed to whet an appetite, in their recent catalogue of "A Collection of books illustrating the literary history of Great Britain during the last fifty years of the eighteenth century." A special catalogue is promised, unless this preliminary cast hooks a buyer for the papers *en bloc*. Another interesting group of manuscripts in this catalogue relate to Thomas Percy of the "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," including a statement of his account with the publisher Tonson in 1765.

"A LIST of the chief printed works of George W. Robinson, 1899-1927. Sub specie aeternitatis," puts in permanent form material which is of no consequence in itself, but which is well worth while as a matter of record. For nearly thirty years Mr. Robinson has been rendering an invaluable service to Harvard, not as secretary to its Graduate School, helpful as that work has been, but by saving members of the Harvard faculty who write books, from inevitable blunders. His is the rare type of exact and comprehensive scholarship which knows when statements are inaccurate and how queer names ought to be spelled. It goes with the type of mind that never fluctuates. These printed works of his consist, with an exception or two, of books with other men's names on the title pages. These others would be the first to acknowledge that their books owe such absence of errata as they may claim, chiefly to his collaboration in preparing manuscript for press and in watching over its course until it is more or less safely out of the press-room. Harvard is proud of its output so far this century, and not least for a relatively high standard of correctness in the publications which its men have sponsored. Those who have probed below the authorial surfaces know that no small part of this is due to the good fortune which has made available the assistance of Mr. Robinson, and of two other workers, David M. Matteson and Miss Addie F. Rowe, who share with him much of the tedious drudgery of helping to make other men famous.

THE Grolier Club inaugurates what promises to be a notable season of book club publications with a handsome, albeit huge, volume entitled "Notes on the American Press at the end of the Eighteenth Century," the word Press in this case meaning newspapers. The author is Professor Bernard Fay of the University of Clermont-Ferrand, who has for a number of years been a familiar sojourner at intervals in various American universities which possess material bearing on the relations between France and the Anglo-American colonies. His search for material carried him through the files of the principal eighteenth century newspapers. This material has been supplemented by prolonged investigation in the French archives, where he found documentary material, chiefly in the correspondence of diplomatic agents, which is of the highest value.

It is refreshing to come upon an historical essay which recognizes that the primary purpose of historical writing is to be read. M. Fay sets out, not to be entertaining, but to present his information clearly, succinctly, and effectively. It is a kind of writing which is frequently met with in French treatises, and which one is apt to suppose is somehow dependent upon that language for its charm. M. Fay has rendered an important service in demonstrating that it can be done very nearly if not quite as well, in English, provided the writer has the Gallic clarity of intellect and precision of vocabulary, supported by familiarity with the material.

The striking thing about this essay is that, while it is packed with data, the facts are always used to develop or support the author's ideas regarding the significance of the material with which he is dealing. He is concerned throughout with the meaning of newspapers, as a factor in the life of the community. He regards them precisely as a reader trained by the eighteenth century French philosophers would have done. Primarily, it is the development of a public opinion, as the controlling force in civic life, that comes out of this study. Recognizing this, and perceiving that it depended upon the newspapers, the French Government, and undoubtedly the English as well, set itself the task of neutralizing the press's power of interfering with their schemes for directing the course of American affairs. M. Fay produces the evidence which shows how the European agents tried to accomplish their purposes, adding a new and most important chapter to the detailed history of this country.

It may be that the Publication Committee of the Grolier Club did not realize that they were providing their fellow members with a notable, as well as a readable, piece of historical writing. This would explain why they chose to illustrate it, most suitably, with twenty-six facsimiles the full size of colonial newspapers. These add enormously to the value of the publication as a contribution to the history of American papers, making it in effect the much needed preliminary preface to the all-but completed "Check-List of Newspapers" issued by the American Antiquarian Society. Pending the appearance of the Introduction to the latter publication, M. Fay's "Notes" will serve as the foundation for any studies in the field of American newspaper history.

The size of the facsimiles controlled the size and shape of the volume, and Mr. Rollins, who set it in type at his personal "Sign of the Chorobates," took full advantage of the opportunity to make a strikingly handsome book. One is inclined to quarrel with the folding of the facsimiles, whose chances of prolonged life would have been better if they had been stubbed at the middle instead of at one end. A portfolio for which the club already has a precedent, would have been better still.

THE most significant feature of the current Year Book of the Gutenberg Gesellschaft is the evidence it affords of an active interest in every aspect of the history of book making, all over Europe. Of the thirty-one articles, averaging less than ten pages each, only six or seven deal with incunabula. The increasing attention being paid to sixteenth century imprints is shown by several articles on individual printers and localities where the first presses date from that period. The seventh is still a desert waste, typographically, but the eighteenth century is represented here by a useful list of books illustrated by Gravelot, and an account of printing at Monaco, which is useful as evidence of the duplicity of imprints. Articles on present-day printing in Poland, Russia, Sweden, the Ukraine and England (an account of the Curwen Press by Oliver Simon), as well as in Germany, give a fair idea of modern tendencies. An account of book production in Bulgaria gives some very suggestive tables analyzing the annual output of recent years by subjects. Nothing could be more effective as evidence of the intellectual status of that country. It is much to be hoped that this will be followed by similar articles giving the figures for other nations. These would become increasingly valuable as the opportunities for comparison are enlarged, and the normal output in various subjects became established statistically.

Statistics of this character are notoriously deceptive, because of the inevitable perversion due to personal equations. Nevertheless, with all allowances and a clear recognition that they can only be approximately accurate at the best, they have a very real value as an incentive to serious thinking. The Bulgarian figures for 2,725 works printed in the year 1926 assign to literature 679, art 105, philosophy 42, religion 135, law 108, sociology 322, history 40, geography 20, mathematics 60, natural sciences 41, medical 45. This is a striking background for the items of news regarding that country which find their way into newspapers in the United States.


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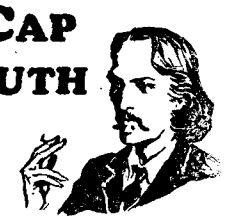

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WE UNDERSTAND that the interest of collectors and dealers in rare literature has lately turned avidly to handwritten manuscripts by eminent modern authors. We know so many authors who use the typewriter almost exclusively that such manuscripts must now be fairly difficult to find. Of course, *Eugene O'Neill* is said to "push the pen" entirely (we believe that "Anna Christie" was written diminutively on both sides of two sheets of paper!), and the script of *Colonel Lindbergh's* "We" was recently submitted entirely in longhand. But Colonel Lindbergh's publishers, G. P. Putnam's Sons, have called attention to this fact as a rare occurrence in a modern publisher's office. Naturally, not so rare an occurrence is the writing of the first draft with pen or pencil. But almost all final drafts are now typewritten before being submitted. And probably in more cases than we know of there are first drafts in longhand. Inasmuch as the cash value of such is now going up we advise all authors of merit carefully to save them. . . .

As Putnam's points out *William Beebe* has dictated from undersea through a telephone installed in a diving helmet, *James Boyd* uses a dictaphone to write his historical novels, *Hilaire Belloc* (strangely enough!) was one of the first to take to the typewriter. *Lord Dunsany*, however, doesn't even use a fountain-pen. He trims old-fashioned quills for his fantasies. To return to Colonel Lindbergh, we wonder how high the original MS. of "We" will be valued. And as for Eugene O'Neill, we hear that his originals are now feverishly sought after. Perhaps these facts will turn writers back into longhand composition. We don't know. But what a terrible thing it would be for the typewriter industry! . . .

We have received the following letter from Arthur Guiterman:

I've just been reading Louis Untermeyer's "Kindly Couplet" about the generous lady which runs,

*Her charity greater than any I've known;*
*If you ask her for bread, she will give you a scone.*

I think that the second line is quite clever; but I thought it even more original back in 1921 when it appeared thus in some verses of mine on the City of Glasgow:

*But drab is the town as a shawl-hooded crone,*
*And dreary and cold with a chill all its own.*
*You ask them for bread and they give you a scone,*

*In Glasgow*

The verses are included in my collection "The Light Guitar" (copyright, 1923, by Harper & Bros.), which I heartily recommend as containing much more good material.

Sincerely yours,

ARTHUR GUITERMAN.

. . .

We extend our good wishes to *Arthur Sullivant Hoffman*, the new editor of *McClure's*. *McClure's* has gone through many vicissitudes of late years, but Hoffman made such a thoroughly good periodical out of *Adventure* that we have confidence in the future of his new piloting. Back in the days of "the old McClure's" (concerning which there ought to be a Do You Remember Club, for a better popular American magazine has never been printed) Hoffman contributed some short stories to *S. S.'s* publication. We recall them clearly, and darned original and entertaining tales they were. Now, in Hoffman's first number he makes a break with precedent by printing in sequence *three* short stories by a new writer, *Edward L. McKenna*, a man who quite evidently has journalistic experience behind him. They're good yarns. . . .

A Philadelphia poet who is also a crack tennis player is *Mary Dixon Thayer*, of the staff of the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*. She is the tennis champion of Pennsylvania women and ranks within the first ten nationally. She has published several books of poems, the last being "Ends of Things" (Dutton). On the court she is known as Mollie Thayer. . . .

*Geoffrey Scott*, author of "The Portrait of Zélide," is now in this country collaborating with *Colonel Ralph Isham* in the arrangement of the *Boswell* papers contained in the famous "Ebony Casket." "Zélide" was one of the many ladies to whom Boswell addressed fervent love letters. "The Portrait of Zélide," by the way, has just been published in a new popular edition by Scribner, with a new postscript by Mr. Scott on *Benjamin Constant*, one of Zélide's most ardent admirers. . . .

A revival of interest in the famous *Oscar Slater* case in England has been one of the results of the indignation over the *Sacco-Vanzetti* execution. Oscar Slater has served eighteen years of a life sentence for murder in Peterhead Jail in Scotland. Recently the *London Daily News* published an affidavit by *Mary Bannerman* declaring that *Fiscal Hart*, who prosecuted the case, got her to change her statement (that Slater was "very like the man" she had seen running from the home of *Miss Gilchrist*) to a positive identification. This revelation, we understand, has at length resulted in Slater's release from jail. It all only goes to show what frightful possibilities for the miscarriage of justice lurk within the law. The *London Nation and Athenaeum* drew a parallel between the Slater case and the Sacco-Vanzetti case. This month, in *Vanity Fair*, you may read an article by *Edmund Lester Pearson* on the Slater case, and you can get the whole detailed review in "The Trial of Oscar Slater," edited by *William Roughead* and published by the John Day Company as one of the volumes in their importation of the Notable British Trials series. If you have a legal or even a lay interest in crime this series is fascinating. . . .

*Sig Spaeth* has followed his popular "Read 'Em and Weep" with "Weep Some More, My Lady" (Doubleday), a collection of the old songs that, both in text, music, and illustrations, is a gem indeed for the front parlor. (Yes, we mean "living room!") The only modern illustration is a photograph of *Harold Moffett* and *Eleanor Shaler* singing "Fallen by the Wayside." And if you were ever in *Don Dickerman's* "County Fair" last winter, and heard them sing it, you will recall the event with happy tears. Eleanor Shaler may not yet be a *Beatrice Lilley*, but she has been making a great reputation for herself as a burlesque singer and dancer. . . .

*Donald F. Rose's* little magazine *Stuff and Nonsense* that comes from Bryn Athyn, Pa. (and, by the way, we are *not* his New York agent or anything like that, even if we do mention him once in a while) has committed a twelve-page issue, full of amusement. Among the amusing things is a series of "Scrambled Slogans" prepared by "our own expert sloganeer," *F. P. T.* Here are a few of the best:

India Umbrellas—"Ask the Man Who Loans One."

Gilda Gray—"The Dear that Made Milwaukee Famous."

College Humor—"Not a Laugh in a Carload."

Ziegfeld Follies—"His Master's Vice."

True Story Magazine—"Chases Dirt."

Colgate's Toilet Water—"What a Difference a Few Scents Make."

Prohibition—"It's Roasted."

Our friend, *Harriet Monroe* of *Poetry*, 232 East Erie Street, Chicago, sends us the announcement of *The Poetry Clan*, which will operate on a scheme similar to the Book-of-the-Month Club, the chief difference being that it limits itself exclusively to books of poetry, and that it distributes such books to its subscribers on a bi-monthly basis. The annual payment, or "dues," is twelve dollars a year; that is, almost exactly the retail price of six books. One book has already been distributed to the members of the Clan, *George Dillon's* "Boy in the Wind," and a darn good choice it is! "Boy in the Wind" is published by the Viking Press and is the best first book of poems in years. . . .

*Mary Webb*, whose last novel, "Precious Bane," won for her the Femina-Vie-Heureuse Award, died in London on October 8th. She was the author also of "Gone to Earth" and "The Golden Arrow," fine novels of the remote and lonely districts of Wales. "Armour Wherein He Trusted" is the title of her new novel as yet unpublished. . . .

With regards to all!

THE PHŒNICIAN.


*from* THE INNER SANCTUM *of*
**SIMON *and* SCHUSTER**
*Publishers* . 37 West 57th Street . *New York*

F. P. A. hereby receives *The Inner Sanctum's* private Pulitzer Prize for the perfect simile, the perfect review and the perfect tribute, all contained in the following single paragraph on ARTHUR SCHNITZLER'S new novel *Daybreak:*

> We could no more quit reading *Daybreak* before we had finished it, than say "Well, this is my last hand," when we were a *terrific loser.*

The columnists are all coming out for *Daybreak.* Says ELMER DAVIS in The New York Herald Tribune:

> SCHNITZLER being a classic, publishers can afford to issue his short books at a reduced price. Read *Daybreak* and you are likely to emit a lusty roar at the next overstuffed novel that comes your way.

Early prowlers in *The Inner Sanctum* yesterday might have found the sales manager and the editorial director huddled in earnest conclave. The pith of it all is contained in these solemn resolutions:

> a—That SCHNITZLER'S new novel *Daybreak* was getting under way even faster than *Fraulein Else, Beatrice, None But the Brave,* or *Rhapsody.*
> b—That it was best to be absolutely frank with the reading public and feature *Daybreak* as a novel of cards and women—which it is.
> c—That if the re-orders keep swirling in, giving the house a sixth best seller, and upsetting all our expensive five-out-of-ten-best-sellers advertising, we will just have to grin and bear it philosophically.

HARRY HANSEN'S assertion that "SCHNITZLER packs into 200 slight pages what few novelists achieve in 400" is echoed by almost every review. Publishing SCHNITZLER'S novels is *The Inner Sanctum's* contribution to the Forest Conservation program.

*Trader Horn* forges far ahead in our own sweepstakes this week. Any members of the American Skeptics Society who challenged our recent announcement that this book was earning $4,000 a week in royalties are hereby informed, not without a little gloating, that on the first two days of this week alone orders for more than 3,100 copies were counted by our embattled adding machines.

To-night the monastic brethren of the sanctum forsake the lamp and the library to prowl about million-footed Mannahatta. It is not to be simply a plunge into night life but our first chance to behold the flaunting and many-hued "twenty-four sheets" posted up and down the isle proclaiming the glories of *The Story of Philosophy* and *Trader Horn.*

Modesty is a shabby and paradoxical virtue if one calls too much attention to it, but *The Inner Sanctum* cannot resist the temptation to tell this one: Three months ago when we wrote copy for our outdoor advertising campaign, we calculated that by the third week of November *Trader Horn* would be in its 75th thousand and *The Story of Philosophy* in its 200th thousand. To-day *Trader Horn* is in its 92nd thousand and when our next printing order comes through (any minute now) *The Story of Philosophy* will be entering (we can scarcely believe it ourselves) *its third hundred thousand.*

—ESSANDESS



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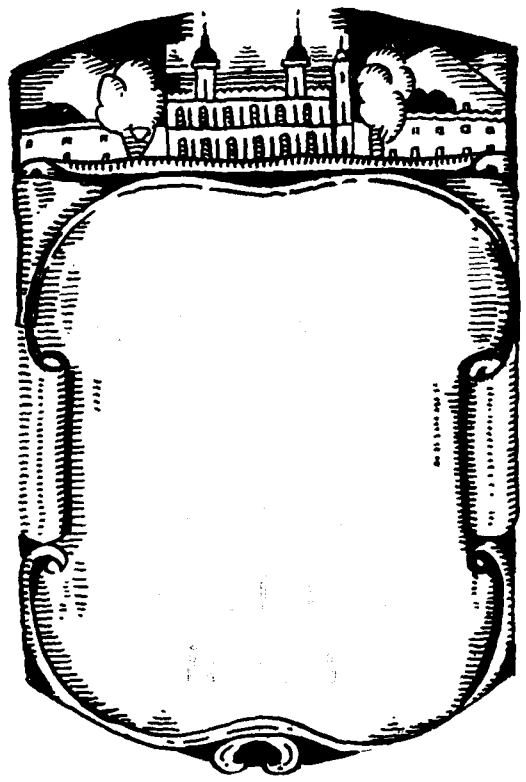

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